

LANGUAGE AND LITERATURE

COLLEGE ENGLISH



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College English is published monthly from October to May at the University of Chicago Press, 5750 Ellis Avenue, Chicago, Illinois. Subscription price, \$4.00 per year, single copies, 55 cents; in Canada, \$4.35; in other countries in the Postal Union, \$4.60. *College English* and the *English Journal*, to one address, \$6.00; in Canada, \$6.70; in other countries in the Postal Union, \$7.20. Subscribers are requested to make all remittances in United States currency or its equivalent by postal or express money order or bank draft.

Correspondence from libraries, agents, and dealers should be addressed to the University of Chicago Press. All other communications should be addressed to *College English*, 211 West Sixty-eighth Street, Chicago 21, Illinois.

Entered as second-class matter September 26, 1939, at the post office at Chicago, Illinois, under the Act of March 3, 1879.

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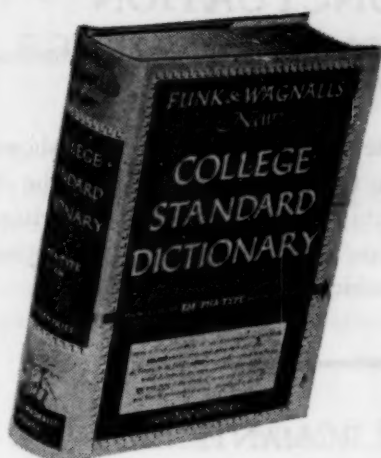
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Our Contemporary Henry James

EDWARD WAGENKNECHT¹

Very likely, too, some day, all my buried prose will kick off its various tombstones at once.—HENRY JAMES to W. D. HOWELLS (1888).

I

JUDGED by the frequency with which his name appears upon publishers' lists, Henry James stands, thirty-two years after his death, as our most prolific American author. To say nothing of the new editions of his novels and of other single works that are continually coming out, we have had, during the last few years, a number of widely circulated omnibus collections of his shorter fiction.² There have been collections of his critical writings and his travel-sketches.³

¹ Professor of English, Boston University. Author of *Cavalcade of the English Novel*, etc. Current publications (autumn, 1948): *Joan of Arc, An Anthology of History and Literature* (Creative Age Press); *A Fireside Book of Yuletide Tales* (Bobbs-Merrill).

² *Great Short Novels of Henry James*, ed. Philip Rahv (Dial Press, 1944); *Stories of Writers and Artists*, ed. F. O. Matthiessen (New Directions, 1944); *The Short Stories of Henry James*, ed. Clifton Fadiman (Random House, 1945). *The American Novels and Stories of Henry James*, ed. Matthiessen (Knopf, 1947) embraces both long and short fiction, as its title implies. Rutgers University Press has announced *The Ghostly Tales of Henry James*, ed. Leon Edel, and the same editor is said to have a complete edition of James's plays in preparation.

³ *The Art of Fiction and Other Essays*, ed. Morris Roberts (Oxford University Press, 1948); *Portraits of Places*, ed. George A. French (Lear Publishers, 1948).

His dramatic criticism has been brought together.⁴ F. W. Dupee has made an anthology of critical writings concerning him,⁵ and Simon Nowell-Smith another of biographical materials.⁶ F. O. Matthiessen has given us a very important study of the last great novels⁷ and an immense book on the James family⁸ and (in collaboration with Kenneth B. Murdock) has, for the first time, deciphered and printed James's immensely important notebooks.⁹ A book-length study of James by Osborn Andreas will probably be in print ahead of this article,¹⁰ and a great deal of other work is known to be under way. In the case of a writer who probably lost money during his lifetime for nearly all of America's leading publish-

⁴ *The Scenic Art*, ed. Allen Wade (Rutgers University Press, 1948).

⁵ *The Question of Henry James* (Holt, 1945).

⁶ *The Legend of the Master* (Scribners, 1948).

⁷ *Henry James: The Major Phase* (Oxford University Press, 1944).

⁸ *The James Family, Including Selections from the Writings of Henry James, Senior, William, Henry & Alice James* (Knopf, 1947).

⁹ *The Notebooks of Henry James* (Oxford University Press, 1947).

¹⁰ *Henry James and the Expanding Horizon* (University of Washington Press).

ers, this is surely an interesting phenomenon.

I do not, of course, mean that Henry James has ever gone without readers. With fastidious lovers of letters, as with intelligent critics, his rating has always been high. Furthermore his influence upon the psychological trend of modern fiction has been tremendous. But the point is that it has always been an influence quite out of proportion to his circulation. He himself declared, in his prime, that publishing books was, for him, like taking them out and dropping them into the mud. His two greatest short stories, "The Altar of the Dead" and "The Beast in the Jungle," he could not get printed by any magazine editor in the English-speaking world. The collected New York edition of his writings brought him in, during his last years, about \$250 a year in combined royalties from England and America. Now I have not, I confess, yet received word that the recent Macmillan edition of *The Princess Casamassima* has been announced as a future "premium" by the Book-of-the-Month Club. Nevertheless, the James books are appearing; and if there are any publishers in America who are in business for the advancement of "literature," I should much like to enjoy their acquaintance. When all allowances have been made and all discounts taken, we are still in the presence of such a revival as few of us had ever hoped to see.

Why? Many reasons have been suggested. "Psychology" is the magic word of the twentieth century: it seems only natural that we should turn back to the founder of the psychological novel. So many novelists since James have written more obliquely, more obscurely, than he did that he can now, for the first time, be read with comparative ease. He had, as he himself once declared, "the imagi-

nation of disaster"; the English-speaking world needed two world wars to jolt it out of its complacency before it could understand him. His faith in human personality seems much more important now, when so many dangerous forces menace the individual from every side. His conviction that fiction is an art appeals to us in a day when so many novelists have allowed the novel to disintegrate in their hands; the high and important place which he accords the human will contrasts refreshingly with the current books in which human beings appear as mere helpless pawns of the social "forces" playing upon them; his decency, his idealism, his excellent manners, cast the Shadow of a Great Rock across the Weary Land in which a Streetcar named Desire carries helpless derelicts up and down Tobacco Road.

There is, no doubt, "something in" all this. But one can never be sure why any artist "catches on" or fails to "catch on." This much is certain: James's values are James's values. They are the values that he wrote into his books, not merely the values that we can read out of them. It is quite true that we may be more sensitive to his meaning than his contemporaries were. But, unless we are mistaking autobiography for literary criticism, the values were there from the beginning, and there never was a time when it was possible for anybody to read James's novels without understanding them. To the consideration of these values we must now turn. And if we would really learn what James may mean to us, we must make him, not ourselves, the center of the picture.

II

The first thing which must be understood clearly if James's novels are to be read intelligently is that they were writ-

ten from the point of view of an observer, not an actor, in the theater of life. He stood on "the rim of the circle," and, as he himself said, "the only form of riot or revel ever known to . . . [him] . . . [was] that of the visiting mind." Such a temperament *may* lead its possessor to confront life merely with a claim for exemption; it may, on the other hand, mean rather an uncanny ability to live vicariously, almost selflessly, in others' lives. This is what it meant for James, who, like his own Rowland Mallet, always had "sympathy as an active faculty." But an age which understands the contemplative life so little as does our own must necessarily experience great difficulty in comprehending these things. They have, indeed, often quite failed of comprehension, and widespread obfuscations concerning the nature of James's work have been the result.

Setting aside such noncreative sensations as physical pain and physical conflict, the three intensest forms of experience which human beings can know are sexual intercourse, mystical rapture, and aesthetic creativity. James seems never to have known either the first or the second—though he comes pretty close to having achieved a kind of translation of the latter from the devotional to the aesthetic plane in his rapturous communings with his muse. The third, however, he knew as well as any man who has ever lived.

He is, before all else, the novelist of experience imaginatively apprehended, the only kind of experience which, in his view, anybody could ever be said to have possessed. He wanted to understand life, not merely to fling himself into it, and, for understanding, a certain detachment is prerequisite. He embodies, therefore, the principle that experience in itself is worthless until it has been adequately

interpreted by the mind and its significance understood.

This is the answer to those who urge that James could not be a great novelist because he never "lived." When he came to write his autobiographical works, he wondered at "the quantity, the intensity of picture recoverable from even the blankest and tenderest state of the little canvas." Like Lambert Strether, of *The Ambassadors*, he knew that "a man might have . . . an amount of experience out of any proportion to his adventures."

There can be no question that James had this. He had it in youth: "Never did a poor fellow have more; never was an ingenuous youth more passionately and yet more patiently eager for what life might bring." And he had it in age, as we may see by reference to his touching and eager protest after H. G. Wells's heartless caricature of him in *Boon*: "Of course for myself I live, live intensely and am fed by life, and my value, whatever it be, is in my own kind of expression of that."

Perhaps this peculiar intensity shows best in his amazing fecundity. He was the most prolific novelist of his kind who ever lived, and he was the last kind of novelist whom one expects to be prolific. Between 1899 and 1904 he published five novels, including his three elaborate masterpieces—*The Wings of the Dove*, *The Ambassadors*, and *The Golden Bowl*—two top-flight collections of short stories, and a long biography of W. W. Story—surely a record untouched, for quantity and quality combined, by any other novelist.

With James, observation itself became the intensest possible form of activity. Nothing was taken for granted. Rather it must be "looked at and listened to with absorbed attention, pondered in thought, linked with its associations," and never released "until the remembrance had been crystallized in expres-

sion, so that it could be appropriated like a tangible object."¹¹ This process increased in intensity, and became ever more and more wearing, throughout his life; when, after 1914, he applied it to the harrowing business of the war, it killed him.

In the light of these considerations, the reader ought, I think, to be able to understand that it was something larger than technical considerations which caused James, in his most characteristic work, to tell his story "through the opportunity and the sensibility of some more or less detached, some not strictly involved, though thoroughly interested and intelligent, witness or reporter, some person who contributes to the case merely a certain amount of criticism and interpretation of it." If it is understanding—"high lucidity"—that you are after, then obviously you must tell your story from the point of view of one who can understand. *The Spoils of Poynton* would not "come," for example, until a Fleda Vetch had been born in the author's imagination to comprehend the significance of what must take place.

All these considerations have been neglected, again, by those who, early and late, have berated James for his residence abroad. He did not, as the man in the street has always believed, adore Europe and hate America. Most of his noblest characters are Americans; he was conscious of poverty and suffering in Europe long before he wrote *The Princess Casamassima*; and he saw the chink in England's armor long before the armor itself had begun to split. It is quite true, nevertheless, that he ceased, in a manner, to be an American, without ever quite becoming a European. Only, since he did not write the kind of fiction which de-

pends upon immersion or upon contact with some particular locality, all this is utterly unimportant; if he was detached from America, he was also, in the same sense, detached from business, from politics, and from much besides. Of course, this is not to say that he paid nothing for his detachment. One novelist cannot have the qualities of all novelists; if this were true, no more fiction would ever need to be written; neither can the advantages of detachment and of immersion be had together. James would have been detached from the American scene had he never laid eyes upon Europe; only, in that event, his fiction would be much less rich than it is. However little he may have understood him in some aspects, William James was quite right when he declared that his brother was never a native of anything except the James family. And Theodora Bosanquet, his discerning secretary of later years, went further when she made him, in his own, queer, secular way, a stranger and pilgrim among men: "He was a citizen of another world who would never have been at home anywhere on this earth."

III

The emphasis upon understanding in the foregoing discussion might seem to indicate that the writer believes James to have been a philosophical novelist. In a sense, this is exactly what he was not; it is ironical that so much should have been made of the difficulty of reading a writer whose books are so innocent of "ideas" and who was never really "intellectual" except in his attitude toward fiction. Even in the arts James's range was narrow. He had a competent knowledge of painting, and his own work has often been compared to that of great painters—Veronese, Sargent, Renoir. But poetry and music meant little to him, and his

¹¹ Percy Lubbock, Introduction to *The Letters of Henry James* (Scribners, 1920).

literary allusions are insignificant and conventional. As a critic, he was hardly at home with anything except nineteenth- and twentieth-century fiction in French and English. He had a keen sense of the past; this is, indeed, one of his deepest notes. But it is only the recent past which enthral him—"a palpable, imaginable, *visitable* past." The novel called *The Sense of the Past* is the subtlest monument to this human feeling that has ever been wrought; it is drenched in the same nostalgia that informs the songs of Edward MacDowell. But James's essential modernity, his real lack of historic sense, was never better revealed than in the plans he made for the development of that book. Passionately as he has yearned "to remount the stream of time," Ralph cannot, once he has reached it, be content to remain in the past; and his lovely Nan, "the exquisite, the delicate, the worthy-herself-to-be-modern younger girl," suffers dreadfully because she must be shut out from the future.

Indifferent to "ideas" and uninterested in most of humanity's activities, James concerned himself as novelist almost wholly with personal relationships. From childhood, his was a human world exclusively, and humanity spoke to him as nature speaks to the romantic poet. In *The Question of Our Speech*, he declares bluntly that "all life comes back to the question of our relations with each other."

There are dangers involved in such a concentration, and James did not always escape them. But he was always saved from the excesses of the narcissists by his objectivity; he never devoted himself, like D. H. Lawrence, to "art for my sake." He is, indeed, the most objective of all "psychological" novelists; though he is committed to the consideration of "problems," these problems are not his

own. There is, indeed, a stern classical element in James, which even leads, at times, to an arrangement of materials in terms of a symmetry so formal that some critics have attempted to express it in terms of algebraic formulas.

James did not feel that either learning or formal philosophy was necessary for the understanding of life, but sensitiveness and "awareness" were indispensable. The very finest thing ever said about him is Conrad's description of him as "the historian of fine consciences"; but the fineness of his characters is not merely moral. Consequently, they are forever making distinctions which to many readers seem merely an exercise in hair-splitting; consequently, again, the reader who has really entered into James's world is always tempted to find other novelists crudely underdeveloped in comparison.

Exceptional persons are, by definition, rare; committed as he is to the "superior case," it is not surprising that James should often seem to stand out of the main stream. And, since the logic of the situation often obliged him to set his people free from ordinary domestic and economic cares, so that he—and they—might concentrate upon the spiritual problems which were the primary concern of his fiction, he was obliged to choose many of them from the leisure class. So he has been accused of trifling and of snobbery; neither charge can be sustained. There are many humble, simple souls in his books who are lovingly presented; he refuses to give them the center of his canvas not because he scorns them but simply because they cannot provide him with the material he needs for his subtle and analytic art. In his pages the world of "society" merely provides a theater for a searching consideration of profound spiritual realities,

a search conducted with a sense of values as keen and sound as can be found anywhere in fiction. Thus Milly, in *The Wings of the Dove*, is made fabulously wealthy, not to increase her intrinsic worth—which is beyond price—but simply to intensify the pathos of her doom: the richer you are, the more, obviously, you have to lose. In *The Princess Casamassima* James tried to consider Jamesian problems with a "workingman" as protagonist—and was driven to the expedient of having most of the action take place on Sunday.

He wanted to deal with subjects which had "solidity . . . importance, emotional capacity," which were "fine . . . large . . . human . . . natural . . . fundamental . . . passionate." He insisted that a novel must have charm, must inspire even when concerned with a dispiriting subject. When his own seem to lack breadth, his modesty is the cause. For all its monstrous "development," there was an unpretentious side to his art. He had the idea that any theme is large if adequately handled, any subject dignified if treated in a dignified manner, as Maisie, Fleda, and the heroine of *In the Cage* dignify the degraded concerns with which they are doomed to deal: "where a light lamp will carry all the flame I incline to look askance at a heavy."

The usual objection to James's novels is that vulgarity lies out of his range: he is thin, fine-spun, and bloodless. This is nonsense. His early tales were steeped in violence and melodrama, and he never lost the power to handle the coarser aspects of life when he chose. If it is vulgarity that you are after, how can you do much better than Kate Croy's dreadful family or that worthy young daughter of the Wife of Bath, the superbly relished Millicent Henning, of *The Princess Casa-*

massima? James can always summon a Dickensian vividness when he wants it; Mrs. Adeney, in "The Private Life," was "all impatience and profile," while Maisie, upon her mother's breast, felt "amid a wilderness of trinkets . . . as if she had suddenly been thrust, with a smash of glass, into a jeweller's shop-front." There is a real "scene" for Drury Lane when Juliana finds the narrator of "The Aspern Papers" rifling her desk; and "thrill" treads upon "thrill" in "The Turn of the Screw."

What people generally mean today when they find James deficient in vitality is that he leaves out the fire in the members. Yet it is difficult to see how any novels could well have a more thoroughly sexual basis than the great triumvirate or be set against a more merciless background of sexual corruption than *What Maisie Knew*. It is dangerous to isolate James's treatment of sex. When Graham Greene accuses him of evasiveness in indicating the nature of the accident which incapacitated him for the Civil War,¹² he forgets that literal recording is hardly the characteristic note of any of James's autobiographical writings; and when Bernard Smith objects to his intellectualizing of sex and his lack of interest in copulation as such,¹³ one can only point out that James takes exactly the same attitude toward all other human actions. Deny the legitimacy of an oblique aesthetic method and the whole Jamesian novel-world falls to the ground.

It is important, on the other hand, to realize that James is a pre-Freudian novelist. As has often been said, his people "live off the tops of their minds."

¹² In *The English Novelists*, ed. Derek Verschoyle (Harcourt, Brace & Co., 1936).

¹³ In *Forces in American Criticism* (Harcourt, Brace & Co., 1939), pp. 207-10.

He is too much committed to the cause of reason to be much interested in the sub-conscious. Though he has had considerable influence upon the "stream-of-consciousness" novel, he would not have approved of it, among other reasons because, lacking form, it would have seemed to him to lack art altogether.¹⁴

IV

The principal difficulty with James's later books, from the point of view of the average reader, however, is the difficulty of the method and the style. It is important to establish at the outset that there was no quest for mystification on James's part. He is committed to clarity up to the hilt, determined to leave nothing to chance, and so eager to explain everything down to the minutest detail that he becomes obscure through very anxiety.

This final style has been variously described. William James, who did not like it, called it "the method of narration by interminable elaboration of suggestive reference" and again "complication of innuendo and associative reference on the enormous scale." Mr. Dooley wanted

¹⁴The Freudian technique has been applied elaborately to the elucidation of "The Turn of the Screw" by Edmund Wilson and a few others; these studies are about as respectable scholastically as the attempts of another group to prove that Bacon wrote Shakespeare's plays. Of late years a number of critics have tried desperately to find homosexual characters in James's stories, but their arguments are not convincing. James might have needed to borrow Mark Twain's vocabulary to express his reaction to the suggestion that the tutor in "The Pupil" is homosexual; it would have been news to him that only a sexual motive could explain the impulse to sacrifice. As a matter of fact, the tutor sacrifices no more for his pupil than Dr. Hugh, in "The Middle Years," sacrifices for Dencombe. Are we to postulate homosexuality here also? I admit that it is difficult for a post-Freudian reader to see Olive Chancellor of *The Bostonians* as anything but Lesbian. In the light of James's own remarks about the story, it would be difficult, however, to prove that Lesbianism was in his mind.

James to "'pit it right up into Popper's hand." Mrs. Humphry Ward, however, brings out the quality of progression and excitement involved when she speaks of "this involution, this deliberation in attack, this slowness of approach toward a point which in the end was generally triumphantly rushed."

Several writers have invoked musical parallels; among these, James Hunecker actually found "simplification" in James's final manner. What he meant was that James omits much of the framework which most novelists consider necessary. But the omission of these noncreative guideposts, upon which the reader has been brought up to rely, do not contribute to ease of reading; indeed, James's omissions are quite as likely to be troublesome as what may seem to the uninitiated the immense overdevelopment of what he chose to give. His concentration upon the results of actions upon their actors rather than upon the actions themselves was an inevitable concomitant of his quest for "meaning"; but Rebecca West was accurate as well as pert when she found James proceeding upon the principle that "if one had a really 'great' scene one ought to leave it out and describe it simply by the full relation of its consequences."

The objective world, in other words, is almost excluded from consideration in these last novels. James concentrates absolutely upon the subject in hand—refuses himself to relax or to allow the reader to relax—but the resultant intensity is secured at the cost of shifting the action to a plane where the author's own limitations of knowledge and experience do not matter. In addition to all this, he has nearly given over the standard novelistic practice of differentiating his personages through distinctive speech.

And this is not because he is trying to make everybody talk like Henry James but simply because he is going in for a "surface" as smooth and as finished as that of the great tapestries.

V

The world of James's fiction is not a philosopher's world, but it is a world based on a very definite set of values. James was not formally religious, but, like Hawthorne's, his indifference to religion has often been greatly exaggerated. He never pretended to be able to explain the mystery of life, but such tales as "The Altar of the Dead" show that he had a deep and abiding sense of the sacred; and he tells us specifically that the origin of his idea for that story could not be isolated for the very reason that the feeling was always there.

Such a man would obviously subscribe to no unnecessary creedal baggage. So far as doctrine goes, James comes closest to committing himself to faith in immortality.¹⁵ Unlike recent deterministic novels, his books assume the freedom of the will. He knew that this could not be demonstrated; but he held that, even if it is an allusion, we must cling to it for the simple reason that the moral life (and the art of fiction) can exist only upon some such postulate. He was not the brother of the great American "pragmatist" for nothing!

He is pragmatist, again, on the great question of the liveableness of life. He knew, as his stories testify, that we are living in a world in which, time and again, the spoils go to the bad, to the impercipient and the undiscerning, but he knew, too, that, even in defeat, these

have a dark victory which they alone among the sons of men can ever know. Fleda Vetch comes to the end empty-handed; but, with the spoils in ashes, she is the only character in the book who is rich because she alone has ever spiritually possessed anything. James would have relished and understood that most touching of the stories that have come to us out of the second World War, the story of the mother who, trapped in an air raid, tried to comfort her terrified child by saying, "Don't cry, my darling. It's not dangerous to die." And though he would not have cared for Samuel Butler's novels, he would surely have agreed with Butler that the question "Is life worth living?" was a question for an embryo, not for a man.¹⁶

Of late years much has been made of James's sense of evil. Graham Greene goes so far as to find it "religious in its intensity" and "the ruling fantasy which drove him to write." This is, I think, a little melodramatic; after all, it was James's father and brother, not James, who each experienced a "visitation" of supernatural evil.¹⁷ Yet, though socialistically minded critics may perhaps have exaggerated his social consciousness, there is no denying that he was aware of "something in the great world covertly tigerish" and that he saw widespread corruption encrusting civilization—and art—itsself.

But, except in "The Turn of the Screw," evil in James is not something that has crawled out of the Pit. It is much more dangerous than that. It wears the best clothes and moves in the best society; often it fails to recognize

¹⁶ See, further, his letters to Grace Norton, *Letters*, I, 100-102, and to Henry Adams, II, 360-61; also *Notebooks*, pp. 106, 179.

¹⁷ See Matthiessen, *Henry James: The Major Phase*, pp. 140-47.

¹⁵ See his article, "Is There a Life after Death?" now conveniently reprinted in Matthiessen's *The James Family*.

that it is evil at all. With a start, Isabel Archer realizes that she has met it in Madame Merle. Mrs. Gereth, of *The Spoils of Poynton*, has surely not led a degraded life. But Mrs. Gereth had "really no perception of anybody's nature," and so she fails. Dante, it should be recalled, saw the damned as those who had lost the good of the understanding. For James, no trouble one may take to understand another is too great; to fail to do so is immorality and failure. And salvation is as difficult in his world as in the New Testament.

Much has been made of his interest in fine manners. But manners for James are merely the outward signs of an inner spiritual grace. So he is wholeheartedly on the side of Daisy Miller, because, though she behaves recklessly, she is innocent and clean and means no harm to anybody. But there can be no forgiveness, save through repentance and amendment of life, for Jasper of "The Patagonia," who compromises a girl for selfish pleasure, though he does not even love her; for Kate and Densher, who use Milly's love to further selfish ends; for the Newsomes, who would damn the whole world outside of New England; or for the Wingraves of "Owen Wingrave," who would force their son into the army, though every fiber of his body and soul cries out against it.

Love and fidelity were the virtues he admired most—the love that accepts and forgives (and refuses ever to admit defeat); the love that will not claim even a just reward, lest one should seem, even to one's self, to have wrought pure deeds for hope of gain; the forgiveness which reaches out and saves and redeems those who, like Prince Amerigo in *The Golden Bowl*, are redeemable and which nobly disdains (but does not punish) those who, like Newman's antagonists in *The*

American, are not. "When you love in the most abysmal and unutterable way of all," says Maggie Verver—"why then you're beyond everything and nothing can pull you down."

Such love necessarily implies fidelity. And the essential point with regard to James's sexual ethic is not, as has so often been said, that he regarded the sexual act as "wrong" but that he believed that, to have human dignity, a sexual relationship, within marriage or without, once established, must endure. "The great thing is to keep faith," as Fleda tells Owen Gereth. "Where's a man if he doesn't? If he doesn't he may be so cruel." Surely it is no accident that Maggie Verver is a Catholic; for no Catholic novelist ever presented the ideal of indissoluble marriage more impressively than James presented it in "Madame de Mauves," *The Portrait of a Lady*, and *The Golden Bowl*.

Fanny Assingham calls Maggie "terrible." She is terrible, as all persons who can "bear anything for love" are terrible. She is terrible as Gandhi was terrible to the British Empire, as Christ was terrible upon the cross. And Milly Theale is even more terrible than Maggie, for Milly dies for her love. Toward Kate and Densher she practices a perfect nonresistance. She turns her face to the wall and gives them the power to kill her; in their last interview she forgives and blesses her false lover; dying, she leaves him the money which was the whole end and object of his plot against her, puts into his hands and Kate's the very thing they had needed to secure their happiness and to obtain which they had done her to death. And by her very surrender she disarms them completely. "I used to call her, in my stupidity—for want of anything better"—says Kate, "a dove. Well she stretched out her wings,

and it was to *that* they reached. They cover us." And the result? "We shall never be again as we were."

The sentimentalists among James's critics are much disturbed over the fact that Maggie's victory entails suffering for Charlotte Stant. Now no novelist ever treated his sinners more kindly than did Henry James. But he did not happen to believe that men can sin without suffering; and, in a world in which the good can conquer only by risking (like Maggie) or (like Milly) by giving all, it would, I fear, have struck him as very odd that anybody should think it fitting for the guilty alone to escape scot-free.

The Ambassadors may seem to the careless reader less idealistic than either the *Dove* or the *Bowl*; but this is not really so. It is only superficially that *The Ambassadors* can be regarded as an anti-Puritan book, for even Madame de Vionnet learns that "the only safe thing is to give." Strether ends as no champion of license; he merely champions the tolerance, the understanding, that the people of Woollett have been unable to learn. Even Chad belongs to Woollett at heart; we know at last that he will not be faithful to his mistress; such men are never free—they merely unbutton occasionally—and all liberty turns license in the end. But Strether, the detached observer, will be faithful in his fashion; and the fact

that the relationship which existed between the French gentlewoman and the young American cad was, in the technical sense, illicit merely testifies once more to James's ability to distinguish between the real and the apparent, to his essential superiority to all the stuffy formalism, legalism, and propriety for which he has been so unjustly reproached.

"To be completely great," Henry James wrote in an early review, "a work of art must lift up the heart." His own novels do this in so eminent a degree as to leave him, not indeed the greatest novelist who ever wrote the English language but certainly the greatest artist who ever became a novelist. "Here," cries Howells, "you have the work of a great psychologist, who has the imagination of a poet, the wit of a keen humorist, the conscience of an impeccable moralist, the temperament of a philosopher, and the wisdom of a rarely experienced witness of the world. . . ." It ought, one feels, to be enough. A generation after his death, the great expatriate who professed to have no opinions stands foursquare in the great Christian-democratic tradition. The men and women who, at the height of the war, raided the secondhand shops for his out-of-print books knew what they were doing; for no writer ever raised a braver banner to which all who love freedom may adhere.

Aladár Kuncz, Hungarian-Transylvanian Writer (1886-1931)

JOSEPH REMENYI¹

I

THE groping of writers of small nations toward international understanding is a heroic and pathetic effort of the human spirit. Few can say that their books transcend the linguistic boundaries of their nation. Unfortunately, too many tawdry or pseudo-clever tales and plays are translated into English and other languages. In the light of creative imagination such substandard authors hardly differ from fortune-tellers. In view of all this, it is of special interest to discuss Aladár Kuncz, the Hungarian-Transylvanian writer whose fame is due in large measure to one splendid book, entitled *Fekete Kolostor* ("Black Monastery"), translated into English by Ralph Murray.² Kuncz had a lovingly critical eye for mankind, a courageous faith in human values. Between the two world wars there were Hungarian authors whose ability surpassed that of Kuncz but few whose devotion to literature and humanism was greater than his.

Aladár Kuncz was born in 1886 in the city of Arad, a Hungarian community now included in Rumania. His father was an educator. With the intent of becoming an educator himself, Kuncz studied at the Eötvös Kollegium in Budapest, an institution patterned after the École

Normale Supérieure in Paris. He was an instructor in Hungarian and classical literatures in a Budapest Gymnasium. His stories, essays, and critical articles appeared in *Nyugat* ("West"), a progressive literary periodical. Kuncz loved French literature, and prior to 1914—a critical year of his life—he visited Paris and Brittany several times. In the summer of 1914 he visited France again. At the outbreak of the war he was arrested as an enemy alien and interned for the duration of the war. After his return to Hungary in April, 1919, he stayed in Budapest. In 1922 he chose Kolozsvár, the capital city of Transylvania, as his permanent home. As the literary editor of *Ellenzék* ("Opposition"), a Transylvanian daily paper, and later as the editor of *Erdélyi Helikon* ("Transylvania Helicon"), a literary monthly, he had a stabilizing and lasting influence upon the development of Hungarian-Transylvanian letters. Immune to chauvinism but unwilling to be a traitor to his native tongue, he knew that in order to breathe freely in the Rumanian political air it was necessary for Hungarian-Transylvanian writers and poets to be attracted to a publication that could give them self-confidence. In an economic sense it was a poor bargain that he made with fate; in an intellectual and ethical sense, however, it meant the glory of humanistic intelligence in an obscure corner of southeastern Europe, obsessed with na-

¹ Western Reserve University, Cleveland, Ohio.

² Aladár Kuncz, *Black Monastery*. Translated by Ralph Murray. Harcourt, Brace & Co., 1934. Pp. 409.

tionalism, provincialism, and persecution.

The scholarly research of Aladár Kuncz shows that he was well aware of his literary obligations. His essay on the position in French literature of Imre Thököli, a seventeenth-century Hungarian national leader; his monograph on Ferenc Toldy, the "godfather" of Hungarian literary history; and his interpretation of the correspondence between Pál Gyulai, the prominent Hungarian literary critic, and Albert Pákh, the founder of *Vasárnapi Ujság* ("Sunday News"), a popular weekly, display the qualities of a discerning rather than an unusual literary scholar. His portraits of Sándor Petöfi, József Lévy, Frigyes Riedl, and other Hungarian and Transylvanian writers and poets indicate a tendency toward successfully combining biography with critical estimation. Kuncz wrote a stimulating essay on Dostoevski's mysticism and the first critical evaluation of Marcel Proust in Hungarian. He did creditable work in the field of translations. As a writer of short stories he was inclined to be vague and chaotic, contrary to his respect for form and clarity. His novel *Felleg a Város Felett* ("Clouds over the City") manifests an overindulgence in emotionalism, but in parts imagination and valid realism are skilfully used and fused. His *Fogházi Jegyzetek* ("Prison Notes") is preliminary to his major work, the *Black Monastery*.

Aladár Kuncz was a noble-spirited and highly civilized man who could transfer the power of goodness and duty to his life and writings. With the universality of a humanist and the humor and humility of a soul experienced in suffering, he applied himself to a life in which personal feelings and social responsibilities suggested the wisdom of a gentle, yet strong

and sympathetic spirit. He did not harvest the fruit of his efforts; nevertheless he had the satisfaction of not having shirked his task as a human being, gentleman, and man of letters.

II

Jules Romains observed that "the Hungarians possess one of the oldest cultures of Europe. They always had to defend themselves against the East from where they originated." Mihály Babits, the Hungarian poet, said that "Hungarian culture grafted the western spirit into an eastern language." One has every reason to guard against generalizations about national characteristics; yet an analysis of Aladár Kuncz leads one into a psychological and ideological realm which verifies the statements of the French novelist and the Hungarian poet. Despite her Eastern roots, Hungary is culturally a Western nation, notwithstanding the assertion of Gyula Moravcsik, the Hungarian scholar, that the Byzantine church played an important role in medieval Hungary. Western Europe is likely to ignore this fact, with the result that Hungarian writers and poets when in England or France seem like persons who look through an iron gate into a garden but hesitate to enter the garden. There were Hungarian writers, however, who refused the unpleasantness of real or fancied insults and who did not feel awkward in Western Europe. In fact, what strikes one about them is the ease with which they adjusted to a foreign environment. They proved their authentic contact with Western Europe by acting nonchalantly, with the naturalness of a humanistic attachment.

Aladár Kuncz represented this type of cultured Hungarian. All his life he had been guided by intellectual and moral principles which exemplified Hungary's

cultural relationship to Western Europe. There is a tragic irony in the "Western" accent of an "Eastern" European country. His Catholic upbringing established his relationship to scholasticism; his concept of individualism suggested an affinity with the Renaissance; his modern taste, a timely awareness of Western Europe. Like the Hungarian nation, Kuncz in his person symbolized the nature of a cultural purpose inevitably preoccupied with a mental and ethical concept of life in which, as norms of human dignity, honor, responsibility, and understanding went beyond the boundaries of a nation's local traditions. Kuncz's concern with Western Europe, like Henry James's, produced an overestimation of humanistic (in the case of James, "aristocratic") European values. This more than anything else explains his shock as a political prisoner in France when he was deeply hurt by officious or vulgar authorities; this also explains his reluctance to reach damning conclusions about France. As an "enemy alien" he came upon a stretch of road in his destiny which seemed to lead to a blind alley. Venomous, ruthless, desolate experiences cheated his confidence in Western European judgment and fair play. These matters could not be hushed up; and when he regained freedom, he wrote about them with forthrightness. But the effectiveness of his judgment consisted in his own fair play, that is, he remembered the joy and education he had received from French literary and philosophical works; and while petty French public officials and military guards invited their denial, his gratitude sustained his faith in the real values of France, even when dispassionateness seemed excessive understanding. It should be stated that the ailments he contracted during his internment shortened his life. Kuncz died in 1931.

In an essay on the new vistas of Hungarian literature, Dezső Keresztury, the Hungarian literary historian, made the following pertinent remark: "To be in the service of Life without a superior humane will is but structureless diffusion, and form without spirit and love but a flutter of strings and the crash of a cymbal." This distinctive principle of humaneness, not as a rhetorical vehicle but as something deep and warm, formed the works of Kuncz. While he lacked dexterity in the handling of his imaginative material, his interest in the inner life of his characters counteracted compositional defects. Most of his stories lack unity; they lack restraint and show ambiguity in the presentation of an idea. They seem hybrid manifestations of a creative spirit that was unable to resist the unnecessary elaboration of feelings which a writer more sure of his skill would have been able to avoid with a less emotive vocabulary. His novel *Felleg a Város Felett* ("Clouds over the City") shows to a large degree his shortcomings. The plot is centered in the city of Kolozsvár; the characters represent distinguished types of a weakened social order. The central character, Tamás Szentgyörgyi, is in love with Clara, a beautiful woman. The novel is a mixture of realistic portrayal and romantic extravaganza. Verisimilitude and irrationality mingle throughout the narration, but the writer could not remove the barriers of the impossible. Character delineation is unsatisfactory; parts of the story seem wasted emotionalism. Nevertheless, in common with his other writings, the various elements of the novel, even in their improbability, possess an "inner form," a soulfulness in which—in the sense of Dezső Keresztury's view—the magic of love and humaneness is present. The style is florid, then again careful, and in its studied

rhythm impressive. As to his philosophy, Henri Bergson had a decisive influence upon Kuncz. This does not mean that Kuncz was anti-intellectual (his humanism would contradict this), but it indicates a profound interest in growth, in developing, in a universal process of self-realization.

III

By contrast and comparison with novels published after the first World War, e.g., Erich Maria Remarque's *All Quiet on the Western Front* or Ernest Hemingway's *A Farewell to Arms*, Aladár Kuncz's *Black Monastery* is as complete an expression and representation of the emotional and intellectual significance of man's reaction to war as the novels of the German and the American novelists. While Remarque is more concerned with moral choice than is Hemingway, both writers expressed with a subjective intonation the motivations, actions, and reflections of man regarding war. Kuncz's work is exclusively the product of his personal experiences. His aim was not to "cash in" on the experiences of his internment; he evidently had an ethical and artistic purpose in publishing them. The plain statements and inferences of the book, its psychological validity and wealth of episodes, the magnitude of its meaning, make of it a superior document of man's mental, moral, and spiritual vicissitudes and degradation. Kuncz was interned at Périgueux, at Noirmontier, and in the citadel of l'Île d'Yeu. V. S. Pritchett in a review summed up thus the merit of the book: "Putting it down at the end, one experiences what is experienced only with the highest kind of literature: a feeling of power, pity and a kind of exaltation." According to Percy Hutchinson, the American reviewer, the book has a "strange, unearthly power." Brian Stoward, an English critic, agreed

with those who called it "a classic of captivity"; and the critic of the London *Times* declared that "the demoralizing effect of years of confinement in more or less the same company, under gaolers of a hostile race and in the midst of the strained atmosphere of warfare, has never been better analyzed, though there have been many books written on the subject. The author's personality as well as his penetration counts for a great deal in this." Another critic speaks about the book as "a peep into the pit."

Kuncz had difficulties in starting the narration. It does not always run smoothly. But even in the matter of composition the book is far above Kuncz's other works. He integrated into one volume the beauty and ugliness of the human spirit as they assert themselves under abnormal circumstances. The internment intensified Kuncz's sense of metaphysical values; it also deepened his sense of social solidarity. With a factual and imaginative force, he shared with the reader the conditions of his fellow-prisoners and his own fears, anxieties, hopes, and frustrations: the foiled attempt of prisoners to escape and the adjustment to gray and dreary surroundings, aggressive and passive resentment against the jailers, dreams about the outside world, utter humiliation of human dignity and pride, the various motivations of human conduct. No magic password could open the prison doors except the ending of the war. There is a touch of the divine and a touch of the perverse in this book; its fluctuations and interludes have a dramatic quality. Human selfishness and selflessness are intermixed; vitality and sterility, indifference and kindness, roguishness and brutality mingle. The mood is sustained throughout all the pages. One senses a conscious and unconscious attempt of the writer to

point to the cathartic significance of suffering and compassion.

Black Monastery testifies to Kuncz's spiritual and moral courage. It points the way to a life which draws its firmness from certain unchangeable rules of human decency and from faith in man's progress toward humaneness. The frequent antitheses, such as goodness and meanness, perseverance and apathy, are projections of human dualism. The views they imply—in individuals and in groups alike—have, of course, a bearing on human life in general, regardless of man's normal or abnormal surroundings. But in abnormal surroundings they seem more intense and coincide with the fantastic rather than with the realistic. Kuncz does not exaggerate; the actual conditions are exasperating. It is a book in which life and death, sanity and madness, the merciful and the misdirected energies of man, the tenseness that lies underneath men's existence and the release they feel when an anticipation of a desirable change affects them, are presented in a manner in which creative resourcefulness, humaneness, observation, and memory demonstrate genuine understanding of the human drama. It is an imaginatively realized, accurate picture of man's plight in a diabolical setting.

IV

When Aladár Kuncz, the cosmopolitan, decided to settle down in Kolozsvár, a lovely but in many ways slow-moving city, his step seemed incomprehensible to some of his friends. His decision can be traced to his Transylvanian childhood memories which provided him with an innocent reason for the native's return. Of course, there were other reasons. In his youth Kuncz was considered a dandy and at times represented overrefinement; meanwhile, however, he learned a great

deal about the wretchedness of human life, about injustice and poverty. Intrinsically a good man, he evidently reached the conclusion that one cannot ignore the deformities of the human struggle; by surrendering to such an attitude one would only add to the futility of being. His intellectual keenness and emotional responsiveness required an outlet; his social and sociable disposition needed an environment in which he could be of real assistance to his fellow-man. Hungarian-Transylvanian culture was on the decline. The inclusion of Transylvania in Rumania necessitated tact and patience on the part of Hungarian writers and poets. Kuncz was faced with terrible odds, but his energy seemed to thrive on misery. He did not accept the German theory of *Stammesgeschichte*, a fanatical attachment to the ethnic spirit; on the other hand, this cosmopolitan enjoyed his regionalistic obligations, wisely perceiving that without roots there is no growth, and his roots, after all, were Transylvanian. He fought provincialism but used regionalism in the service of universality.

The course he took proved to be the right one. Like a woman who does all sorts of household chores, dishwashing, dusting, etc., without losing her essential femininity, Kuncz, without damaging his position as a creator, took care of the household of Hungarian-Transylvanian culture. He knew how to adapt himself to a reality in which, for a time, the entire spiritual and financial economy seemed to break down. Just to be a Hungarian writer in Transylvania automatically branded him as an object of suspicion. One tries to solve problems by trial and error, and Kuncz was no exception. Finally the Rumanians ceased to approach him with a closed mind, which eased the strain of his work and was

bound to increase his influence in many quarters. In an atmosphere not far from the horse-and-buggy age and homespun taste this "Western European" Hungarian writer, critic, and editor personified urbanity on a level that recalls the humanists of centuries ago. Like a tree bending but not breaking in a howling wind, he was an image of strength which some of his best friends did not see in him. Kuncz was not a trenchant critic;

much of his work is ephemeral; but in that juncture of Hungarian-Transylvanian history in which he lived and wrote he was placed in a position for which he was eminently fitted. The initiative was in his hands, when destiny dealt a very serious blow at the body of Hungarian culture. It is reasonable to predict that *Black Monastery* and his work in Transylvania will preserve his name in the annals of Hungarian literature.

The Drama in Shakespeare's Sonnets

ROBERT BERKELMAN¹

WE CAN hardly enjoy Shakespeare's plays without being struck by his tremendous dramatic power. Few of us, however, may fully appreciate the dramatic sense with which he animates even his sonnets. Once read them in this light, we come upon new beauties and discover new strengths.

We find that often the poet's lively word pictures, like characters in a play, are pitted against one another either by sharp contrast or by actual conflict. Rough winds, for instance, may shake the darling buds of May. Time debates with Decay or is asked to "pluck the keen teeth from the fierce tiger's jaws." Wasteful war overturns statues; "broils root out the work of masonry." The hungry ocean undermines the kingdom of the shore, and the land encroaches upon the watery main. Black night comes to take away the sunset, and Day and Night shake hands in agreement to torture the writer with restlessness. Thus the poet's sense of movement and struggle, expressed in verbs that are almost muscular, injects dramatic vigor into the poems.

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Too easily, perhaps, we slip into the habit of classifying Shakespeare's sonnets as lyrics, when we might more fittingly appreciate the best of them for what they are—marvelously condensed dramas. In these dramas Time is often the chief antagonist. Occasionally it is the devouring monster that preys upon youth and beauty. Sometimes it is the huge sickle that cuts down all within its bending compass. Always it possesses the relentlessness of waves making toward the shore. The protagonist that dares to face it may be "breed," love, friendship, or the power of a poetry that aspires to outlive marble and gilded monuments.

Though Time is the villain darkening nearly all the best sonnets, now and then one of them will set the stage for a conflict of another kind. In Sonnet 129 ("The expense of spirit in a waste of shame"), for instance, lust and revulsion struggle against each other, the clash reverberating through the opposition of such phrases as "past reason hunted" versus "past reason hated," "a bliss in proof" versus "a very woe," "a joy proposed" versus "behind a dream," and ending with the pair of intertwined an-

titheuses that give dramatic thrust to the conclusion:

All this the world well knows; yet none knows well
To shun the heaven that leads to this hell.

In Sonnet 144 ("Two loves I have, of comfort and despair") a double bout is waged by "the better angel" and "the worser spirit," a contest between the poet's friend and the poet's dark lady, and an implied contest between the poet's better and his lesser selves, neither conflict to be resolved until one spirit fires the other out. In Sonnet 30 ("When to the sessions of sweet silent thought"), which of all the sonnets appeals most richly to the ear, the dramatic opposition is not so apparent; but the somber mood in which he summons up the past that has faded into "death's dateless night" runs like a haunting obbligato until it strikes the final couplet, which suddenly brightens and sings the praises of present friendship:

But if the while I think on thee, dear friend,
All losses are restored and sorrows end.

Sonnet 73 ("That time of year thou mayst in me behold"), with its conflict between corrosive time and friendship, distils a superb four-act drama into fourteen lines.

That time of year thou mayst in me behold
When yellow leaves, or none, or few, do hang
Upon those boughs which shake against the cold,
Bare ruin'd choirs where late the sweet birds sang.

In me thou see'st the twilight of such day
As after sunset fadeth in the west,
Which by and by black night doth take away,

Death's second self, that seals up all in rest.
In me thou see'st the glowing of such fire
That on the ashes of his youth doth lie,
As the death-bed whereon it must expire,
Consum'd with that which it was nourish'd by.

This thou perceiv'st, which makes thy love more strong,

To love that well which thou must leave ere long.

The three quatrains, each of them exactly one sentence long, unfold the subtly progressive action, and the final couplet brings a resolution of the conflict. The first sentence, picturing the bare trees, laments that the poet has reached the autumn of his year. In the second sentence he has reached the twilight of his day, not long before the coming of black night. By the third sentence his life has become a dying fire, soon to sink into ashes. Thus through these three sentence-quatrains Death, the half-discerned antagonist, stalks nearer and nearer until suddenly, in the couplet, he is confronted by Love (or Friendship) the protagonist. The suspensive, relentless passing of time strangely resembles the movement in Poe's "The Conqueror Worm" and MacLeish's "You, Andrew Marvell."

Perhaps the most richly dramatic of all Shakespeare's sonnets is Sonnet 146, which depicts the age-old struggle between the mortal and the immortal in man.

Poor soul, the center of my sinful earth,
Thrall to these rebel powers that thee array,
Why dost thou pine within and suffer dearth,
Painting thy outward walls so costly gay?
Why so large cost, having so short a lease,
Dost thou upon thy fading mansion spend?
Shall worms, inheritors of this excess,
Eat up thy charge? Is this thy body's end?

Then, soul, live thou upon thy servant's loss,
And let that pine to aggravate thy store;
Buy terms divine in selling hours of dross,
Within be fed, without be rich no more:
So shalt thou feed on Death, that feeds on men,
And Death once dead, there's no more dying then.

Here the poet's masterly intelligence holds his details in a strong tension of opposites. The poem is vibrant with nicely balanced antitheses between the life within and the life without, between

master soul and servant body, luxury and dearth, large cost and short lease, increase and loss, buying and selling, and Death and "no more dying then." Into the creation of Sonnet 146 went a great deal of disciplined brain as well as of understanding heart. No mere outgushing, it survives the closest scrutiny. Indeed, it profits by analysis.

Study reveals a significant contrast between its lofty purpose and the lowly nature of its imagery, as though the poet's head and heart were in the heavens while his feet remained planted upon very solid earth. His figures of speech, the very essence of his poetic expressiveness, are derived from real estate and business, most paradoxical material for such a high theme. Though the poet is musing about immortality, he employs such earthy metaphors as the painting of walls, leasing a fading mansion, living upon losses, increasing stores, and buying and selling. One wonders whether he might not have composed the poem at a time when the background of his consciousness was still crowded with the business of buying and remodeling New Place, at home in Stratford.

Virtually, the sonnet has a plot—a plot based upon the struggle of the body and the soul. The major dramatic division of this plot comes between the octave and the sestet. The first eight lines are composed of the four questions that the poet puts to himself, rebukingly wondering why he has expended such large cost on the fading mansion while the soul has languished within. The last six lines, with the effect of a dramatic soliloquy, turn from the interrogative to the imperative; and the poet, in tones of ringing affirmation, directs the soul to master the body and to achieve divinity by selling hours of earthliness, until, in the most triumphant of all his couplets, he assures the

soul that thus only will it seize the victory from death and win eternal life.

Here more clearly than anywhere else, Shakespeare expresses his most discerning concept of immortality. Usually, quite unlike such cosmic explorers as Dante and Milton, he contents himself with one world at a time; and this present world holds much more of interest for him. In the orthodox sense he was not religious, and he created no greatly religious characters. Rather, he seems willing, with his own Hamlet, to assume that death is a sleep that ends the thousand heartaches and shocks. The life beyond—whenever, infrequently, someone in his plays has occasion to refer to it—is commonly an undiscovered country, and "the rest is silence."

But in this sonnet, for once, he probes more deeply. He does not conceive of heaven as a vague region of pearly mists; heaven is the state that he must struggle to win here and now, if ever, by cultivating the heaven within him. This struggle between the animal and the spiritual being is what imparts to the poem its profound dramatic power, for is not this conflict one of the most universal and significant on which any work of art can possibly be based? None of his plays develops a more searchingly religious theme. Into the sonnet he compacts a whole morality play.

Fortunately, however, the poet-dramatist does not belabor us with his tremendous moral. A lesser poet, with more pulpit-pounding than poetry, may exhort us:

Be not like dumb, driven cattle!
Be a hero in the strife!

In doing so he stirs our resentment by implying that we poor creatures need uplifting and that he is the saint come to edify us. Longfellow spoils a well-meant plea by being direct and didactic; Shake-

speare, instead, imparts power to his truth by being artistically indirect and dramatic. Shakespeare has the good grace to address, as the one most in need, not the readers but himself. We overhear him, as it were, and let his truth sink in. "A Psalm of Life" rebukes us like an arm-waving evangelist; Sonnet 146 whispers, but whispers with dramatic poignancy. The difference between the two ap-

proaches takes the measure, as though with gigantic calipers, of the gulf between didacticism and great art.

Thanks to its essential drama and to its exquisitely patterned contrasts, Sonnet 146, one of the greatest sonnets in our language, glows with the restrained fire of an opal and reveals Shakespeare as the master-dramatist even when he is composing a reflective lyric.

The Last of the Women Georges

L. RUTH MIDDLEBROOK¹

ABOUT a half-century ago—1893, to be exact—*Keynotes*, by one "George Egerton" was published in London. The story goes that three thousand copies were sold within a few months and that the heretofore unheard of author found herself famous almost immediately. And why not? The title page was designed by Aubrey Beardsley; the book itself was dedicated "To Knut Hamsun, In memory of a day when the west wind and the rainbow met."

Nor was that all. A portrait of the author appeared in the *Sketch*. Likewise, the *Yellow Book* gladly opened its pages to George Egerton and her cult. Two years later she was still enough of a favorite for her portrait (by E. A. Walton) to "lead" Volume V, the April, 1895, issue of the quarterly. In 1897 she dedicated her *Fantasias* to Richard Le Gallienne. And in 1901 the *London Academy* still saw fit to devote more than a column to a review of her *Rosa Amorosa: The Love-Letters of a Woman*, a volume which went through three editions in as many months.

So there is no doubt that George Eger-

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ton was a celebrity. She moved in the right circles, knew the right people, and chose the right name. George Sand had been dead since 1876; George Eliot since 1880. Would there never be another "George"? There would, Mrs. Mary Chavelita Clairmont (later Mrs. Golding Bright) decided—and in 1893. Therefore "George Egerton." Therefore *Keynotes*.

Whether she was modest of heart or merely intuitive in the ways of publicity it is difficult to say. At any rate, she would not be interviewed. But no matter. Laura M. Hansson describes her for us: "She had a small, delicate face, with a pained and rather tired expression, and a curious, questioning look in the eyes; it was an attractive face, very gentle and womanly, and yet there was something disillusioned and unsatisfied about it."

As for what has happened to George Egerton's popularity in the last several decades, the unavailability of her books and the merciless lack of bibliographical commentary on either the woman or her works are indication realistic enough.

Yet *Keynotes* was regarded in its day as "a road-breaking book second only to *The Story of an African Farm* in advanc-

ing the cause of woman"—and at least half-a-dozen reviewers had pronounced it singularly artistic and brilliantly suggestive. Why, then, one naturally asks, has our generation so completely left unsung the name of George Egerton? Is it because she is so far removed from us? After all, there are contemporaries of Mrs. Golding Bright whose mixed praises we yet hymn—May Sinclair, Edith Wharton, Gertrude Atherton, to mention a few. The answer, of course, lies in an analysis of *Keynotes* itself, the book that came to the literary world of the early nineties with so fine an air of discovery.

For George Egerton was a writer only secondarily. First and foremost she was a woman. In other words, she wrote first for herself and then for such as would understand that self. She wrote not because she wanted to "write" but because she had to write down woman's world as she lived it—in all its ghastly compromise and mocking inadequacy.

Not that *Keynotes* is addressed to men. If anything, it is a social tract against them—an exposé of them in their desperate inability to understand woman's deepest needs. In truth, *Keynotes* is a woman's book written for woman, in that peculiarly intimate style which is best understood by the feelings and intuition rather than by reason and analysis. It is, as it were, a book for woman's "private use"—and as such unfortunately abounds in all the artistic failings to which "the truth and nothing but the truth" is almost inevitably heir.

But, when we have labeled *Keynotes* a woman's book in the woman's manner, we are not to understand it as a book which abides by all the amenities of reticence prescribed by man for woman. Indeed, so thoroughly honest is George Egerton that one of her reviewers in 1897 is irritated into writing that "those of us who are strong enough not to be shocked

are still human enough to be surfeited and disgusted with the emancipated woman and her morbid dwelling upon one nasty theme."

Before indulging in further critical commentary, however, let us turn to the tales themselves which *Keynotes* presents for the reader. That he may appraise both style and content of this material, I shall summarize, in varying degrees of detail, several of the eight stories in the book.

We come, then, to "A Cross Line," the first story and keynote of George Egerton's octave. It is a sketch more than a story in the technical sense of the word. Or perhaps it is not even a sketch. It is a confessional in the form of a narrative essay—an informal essay—in which the author argues, decries, explodes the impossible fallacies the world in general, and man in particular, hold about woman. To drive home her point, therefore, she chooses a very slight incident.

She is roaming through the woods somewhere back of her home when she suddenly finds herself face to face with a man—a strong, decisive, vigorous man, who is really looking for a trout stream; but the directions he got were rather vague, so he gives up the search, especially since our heroine (the characters are nameless in the story) makes it clear to him that he is welcome. They sit down to talk. The woman is wearing the inevitable wedding ring, but it does not deter his interest in her. Soon enough the conversation takes a personal turn. In effect the man says to the woman: Here am I and here are you. Man. Woman. You approve of me, and I find you irresistible. And now what are we going to do about it? Sit here and talk—and then my hour is over? Why should we have to hide behind words? Are you incapable of affection?

It is at this point that our heroine

"unlocks the word-board." Indeed, one almost believes that the whole story was written around this answer. Incapable of affection?

Of course not [she says]. I share . . . that crowning disability of my sex; but not willingly, —I chafe under it. My God! if it were not for that, we women would master the world! I tell you, men would be no match for us! At heart we care nothing for laws, nothing for systems; all your elaborately reasoned codes for controlling morals or man do not weigh a jot with us against an impulse, an instinct. We learn those things from you,—you tamed, amenable animals; they are not natural to us. It is a wise disposition of Providence that this untamableness of ours is corrected by our affections. We forge our own chains in a moment of softness, and then . . . we may as well wear them with a good grace. Perhaps many of our seeming contradictions are only the outward evidences of inward chafing. Bah! the qualities that go to make a Napoleon—superstition, want of honor, disregard of opinion, and the eternal I—are oftener to be found in a woman than in a man. Lucky for the world, perhaps, that all these attributes weigh as nothing in the balance with the need to love, if she be a good woman; to be loved, if she is of a coarser fibre.

Having delivered herself of this speech, she leaves the stranger who inspired such intimacy in her, but not until she has heard his proposal, which is that if they are to mean to each other what their instinct and reason tell them they should mean, she is to hang something white on the lilac bush near her house. He would pass by that evening and look for her answer.

Our heroine returns to the house. Her husband is there, waiting for her. He is the strong, silent species of mankind, who loves his wife so much that he takes her for granted as he might his horses or his garden or his very breathing apparatus. What is a fellow to do—go about twenty-four hours a day shouting that he appreciates having a good pair of lungs? Well, why should he have to go around crowing out his love for his wife? So that,

when she asks him whether he is fond of her, he replies, "Of course I am, don't you know it?" Whereupon, not too patiently, she answers: "Yes, perhaps I do . . . but I want to be told it. A woman doesn't care a fig for a love as deep as the death-sea and as silent; she wants something that tells her it in little waves all the time. It isn't the *love*, you know, it's *being loved*; it isn't really the man, it's the loving!"

And with these words the woman leaves the room. She is looking through some unusually fine underthings which were too good for everyday use. As she examines the sundry objects, she comes upon a lovely *chemise de nuit* (apparently part of her untouched trousseau), delicately embroidered, heavily "belaced"—the perfect gown, and so white!

Lizzie, the maid, who has been in the room with her, asks what she is to do with it.

"Just hang it out on the lilac-bush," her mistress tells her. "Or, Lizzie, wait. I'll do it myself!"

And here the story ends—with my lady's nightie floating in the perfumed breezes of the lilac bush.

The second story is titled "Now Spring Has Come: A Confidence." Again the tale is simple and as humorlessly ardent. This time the author is telling her story to her faithful servant, Lizzie. Wonderful person, Lizzie. She sits by patiently while her mistress thinks aloud.

What half creatures we are, we women! [the author suddenly announces to Lizzie—for our benefit]—hermaphrodite by force of circumstances, deformed results of a fight of centuries between physical suppression and natural impulse to fulfill our destiny. . . . Every social revolution has told hardest on us: when a sacrifice was demanded, let woman make it. And yet there are men, and the best of them, who see all this, and would effect a change if they knew how. Why it came about? Because men manufactured an artificial morality; made sins of

things that were as clean in themselves as the pairing of birds on the wing; crushed nature, robbed it of its beauty and meaning, and established a system that means war, and always war, because it is a struggle between instinctive truths and cultivated lies.

And then the woman unfolds her tale. She was in a bookshop one day. Her eyes lighted on a particular book, and her hands seized it too. But the shopkeeper came up to her. "No, no," he admonished. "That is a very bad book, madam."

Enough. She would look up the author at once. She would find him if she had to travel the world twice over. She does find him—after a long trip to Norway. He is handsome and vibrant. She cannot resist him. She tears her soul out for him. He is appealing and understanding. But they only *talk* that first day when they meet. At ten o'clock he sends her to her room. Here are her own words:

He came to the top of the stairs with me, and when we bade good night he took my hand and held it curiously as if it were something fearfully fragile, and stood and watched me down the corridor. And will you credit it? I felt inclined to run like an awkward little school-girl.

The point is, she was to think it over. She was to go home—and they would write to each other, and she would return to him in the spring. She does go home and waits—and waits. Winter is gone at last. Spring has come and once more our heroine is in Norway. Once more she is in the very room where she had met the author of the naughty, naughty book.

What happened? Her own words again:

Did he kiss me? Oh, yes. You see I wanted to sift this thing thoroughly, to get clear into my head what ground I was standing on. So I let him. They were merely lip-kisses; his spirit did not come to mine, and I was simply analyzing them all the time. Did I not feel anything? Yes, I did,—deeply hurt. . . . I am not sure that I

had not a keen sense of the ludicrous side of the whole affair; that one portion of my soul was not having a laugh at the other's expense. . . .

Be that as it may, they said goodbye, and she felt as if she had "a sponge with a lot of holes in it, instead of a heart, and that all the feeling had oozed away through them."

And that was that!

But there are several other stories which George Egerton has written into her *Keynotes*. There is, for instance, a trilogy of stories whose setting is "Under Northern Sky." "How Marie Larsen Exorcised a Demon" is the tale of a drunken captain "who spared no man's daughter," and now in a fit of violent tears and purple swearing he wonders how he can ever know that some brute will not harm his own daughter. In his terror he becomes violent and unmanageable—at least, so far as his wife is concerned. But Marie Larsen, an old friend of his, with habits not unlike his, understands, and so it is she alone who has the power to allay his fears, to exorcise the demon and, with her tale of ultimate ablution, literally to hypnotize our captain (who spared no man's daughter) into silence and sleep.

The final sketch in the trilogy, "An Ebb Tide," tells of the death of a man who was more feared than loved by his household. One poor servant girl alone was not afraid of her master, however. The wife understands, and it is this kitchen wench who last holds his hand while it is yet warm.

It is only fair to observe here that in this last trilogy the author achieves a dramatic realism and instinctive, naturalistic method which lend to the book the literary grace and maturity lacking in the earlier sketches.

This, in hurried summary, is *Keynotes* by George Egerton. This is the book of

which a reviewer in the *Literary World* wrote: "These sketches are informed by such throbbing feeling, such insight into complex woman, that we with all speed and warmth advise those who are in search of splendid literature to procure *Keynotes* without delay."

This is the book of whose author we read in the *Liverpool Post*: "To credit a new writer with the possession of genius is a serious matter, but it is nevertheless a verdict which Mr. George Egerton can hardly avoid at the hands of those who read his delightful sketches."

This is the book which, we learn from the *Lady's Pictorial*, is "the work of a woman who has lived every hour of her life, be she young or old. . . . She allows us, like the great artists of old, Shakespeare and Goethe, to draw our own moral from the stories she tells, and it is with no uncertain touch or faltering hand that she pulls aside the curtain of conventional hypocrisy which hundreds of women hang between the world and their own hearts."

As has perhaps too much been intimated, the material itself of *Keynotes* is not a little naïve—that is, in the light of present-day living. Remembering, however, that these utterances came in 1893, when women upholstered rather than dressed and wore their bustles as protective armor for a chastity men had talked them into, we cannot fail to realize why the book—and the author—came to the writing world with so fine an air of discovery.

For whatever the book is not, one thing it is: the most courageous analysis of "the new woman" come out of London's 1893. That its style is undignified, unmistakably feminine, and rather bedimmed, we cannot deny. Yet as a plea for honesty with self, for abandon to truth wherever that truth may lead, it is

without doubt a compelling and significant contribution to the emancipation of woman as she knows it today.

That George Egerton's critics had overestimated her artistic propensities, that her literary friends had accepted desire for fact when they had labeled her "genius," "artist," "writer," is not a little deplorable, of course—the encomiums ring so humorlessly exaggerative, this half-century later. The material itself would not afford the unsuspecting reader of today the unholy glee it does had not her reviewers overreached themselves and held out absurd promises to him, had they recognized *Keynotes* not as a masterpiece "independent of any previous work," but rather as an important chapter in the history of "the new woman."

But this they did not do. And that is why, in the light of objective aesthetic standards today, *Keynotes* has so much become the literary curio of the early nineties—a fate certainly not predicted by its thousands of enthusiastic discoverers, certainly not dreamed of by the author. That is why *Keynotes* is not a great book or George Egerton a great writer.

In view of the fact that George Egerton is the third of the women Georges, however, we ought perhaps to compare her with her famed predecessors, George Sand and George Eliot. But beyond the pen name they have almost nothing in common. Both George Sand and George Eliot wrote from the man's point of view, whatever feminine giveaways their styles inevitably embodied. George Egerton, on the other hand, is always the woman, however masculine her fearlessness. George Sand was the salon libertine, and writer by instinct; George Eliot, the mid-Victorian clergyman, and writer by choice; George Egerton, the woman's

rights woman, and writer by necessity alone.

But George Egerton is not to be confused with a certain school of advanced women writers born in our own genera-

tion who exploit with vulgar insensitivity the intimacies of the man-woman relationship per se. George Egerton was possessed of rare social vision and wrote with high purpose.

*Can the Study of Literature Be Revived?*¹

MARVIN T. HERRICK²

I have always thought it was shameful in the liberal arts, which are bound together in the closest union, to purchase so little profit at so much expense. But certainly in this our own day everything is related to earning a living; the arts ought not to be called liberal, but mercenary or shop-keeping. Who, indeed, by the immortal gods, burns with that purest and most sacred love of knowledge with which all the ancients burned; nay, rather he loves knowledge with a shameful, money-making love. It is glorious, indeed, to understand the principles of motion and rest, the revolutions of the heavens and the planets, and the properties of the elements; but it is most shameful to ignore all antiquity, not even to touch those arts which sway multitudes, which rule the minds of men and penetrate their inmost feelings, so that with no other means one can govern diverse wills, diverse inclinations, diverse minds, and lead them whither he wishes.

THESE are not the words of a contemporary teacher of literature lamenting the sad plight of the humanities. The quotation is from a dedicatory epistle addressed to Cosimo de' Medici in 1548 and written by Francesco Robortelli, the first, and perhaps the greatest, modern commentator on the *Poetics* of Aristotle, the first modern editor of Longinus' treatise *On the Sublime*.

It seems that even in 1548, the high noon of the Italian Renaissance, when Michelangelo, poet, painter, sculptor, and architect, was still active, when Titian had just left Venice to paint the emperor Charles V, when Benvenuto Cellini had just returned to Florence from the court of Francis I, the physical sciences and what we call the applied sciences were in the saddle and what we now call the humanities were being pushed aside. What Robortelli had spe-

cifically in mind, what he was trying to revive, was the study of classical poetry. He was dissatisfied with the conventional study of literature, which had become a dry routine of grammatical and rhetorical analysis. Logic, grammar, and rhetoric had hitherto served the student of literature in western Europe, sometimes very well, and Robortelli had no thought of abandoning these valuable disciplines; but he had rediscovered equally valuable disciplines, such as the study of history and the fine arts. Robortelli had accepted the Aristotelian, and Ciceronian, principle that all the liberal arts and sciences are intimately related. Therefore, he saw that any truly humane study of poetry, which is an "imitation of nature," involves the study of all the liberal arts, which "are bound together in the closest union."

Today, four hundred years later, we are re-examining the position of literature in our schools and colleges, and we find that the physical sciences and the

¹ A paper read at the annual conference of the Indiana College English Association, May 2, 1947, at Ball State Teachers College in Muncie, Ind.

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practical, applied arts and sciences are flourishing, while the so-called "humanities," including literature, are being pushed aside. Classical studies, the chief standard-bearer for humane letters during three hundred of the last four hundred years, have all but collapsed. Our American heirs to classical studies, namely, our departments of literature, are losing ground in the face of seemingly overwhelming aggression on the part of engineers, chemists, physicists, biologists, and the champions of the "social sciences."

The sorry plight of classical education is evident. When the president of the British Classical Association admits that the game is about played out, we no longer need argue. Professor C. M. Bowra, in his presidential address at Oxford in 1945, states that one school at Oxford, celebrated for its eminent classical scholars of the past, has now "ceased to teach Greek because it finds no demand for it." Professor Bowra does not try, as do some classicists, to shift the blame to other shoulders. He frankly admits that the classicists themselves are to blame. He illustrates the decline of interest in the classics with a story of a British headmaster who said to his sixth form: "Boys, this term you are to have the privilege of reading the *Oedipus Coloneus* of Sophocles, a veritable treasure-house of grammatical peculiarities."

There is still much to commend in classical education. Certainly I wish, as doubtless many of you do, that our undergraduate and graduate students came to us with a reasonable command of Latin. We have ceased to hope for any acquaintance with Greek. There is much to commend in the study of grammatical peculiarities, in the established philological, or more properly linguistic, study of English, and in the still approved his-

torical approach to language and literature. We are all familiar with it; we have all learned much from it. But there is no denying the hard fact that the study of literature today is not attracting the best minds in our colleges and universities. There must be some reason beyond the allure of the physical sciences. There must be some reason beyond the desire of money-making, though I am not prepared to offer the reason or reasons.

Let me briefly illustrate with a familiar example of the study of literature. You all know Wordsworth's fine sonnet, "The World Is Too Much with Us":

The world is too much with us; late and soon,
Getting and spending, we lay waste our powers;
Little we see in Nature that is ours;
We have given our hearts away, a sordid boon!
The Sea that bares her bosom to the moon;
The winds that will be howling at all hours,
And are up-gathered now like sleeping flowers;
For this, for everything, we are out of tune;

It moves us not.—Great God! I'd rather be
A Pagan suckled in a creed outworn;
So might I, standing on this pleasant lea,
Have glimpses that would make me less forlorn;
Have sight of Proteus rising from the sea;
Or hear old Triton blow his wreathed horn.

Now let us examine in particular, and in the approved manner taught us by our classical cousins, the last two lines. Where did Wordsworth get these lines? What, in brief, is the literary history of these two lines?

We may easily trace them back to Milton, to a line in *Paradise Lost* (III, 604)—

In various shapes old Proteus from the sea—
and to a line in *Comus* (873)—

By scaly Triton's winding shell.

We may trace them further back to Spenser's *Colin Clouts Come Home Againe* (ll. 244-45, 248-50):

Of them the shepheard which hath charge in
chief

Is Triton blowing loud his wreathed horne: . . .
And Proteus eke with him does drive his heard
Of stinking seals and porcupises together,
With hoary head and deawy dropping beard.

We may go still further back, with a passing bow to George Sandys and Arthur Golding, translators of Ovid, to the first book of the *Metamorphoses* (i. 333 ff.), where we find scaly Triton sounding his "wreathed, trumpet-shell." For old Proteus we may go to Virgil's *Georgics* (iv. 387-89), where, in Dryden's translation, we read:

In the Carpathian bottom, makes abode
The shepherd of the seas, a prophet and a god.
High o'er the main in watery pomp he rides,
His azure car and finny coursers guides—
Proteus his name.

And, finally, we may turn to that marvelous tale of Menelaus and Proteus in the fourth book of the *Odyssey*. You may recall how Menelaus and the daughter of Proteus, wrapped in newly flayed skins, lay in wait among the stinking seals for Proteus to rise from the sea:

When the sun mounts to mid-heaven, that
is the time when the Old Man of the Sea comes
up out of the brine, under the breath of the
west wind.

I maintain that this method of studying Wordsworth is rewarding, illuminating. I question, however, whether such a method is the best one for the general run of students today. In the first place, most of our students are not equipped to pursue such a course; in the second place, most of them do not want to. Wordsworth was right in denouncing the callous, money-grubbing world about him; he was wrong if he meant that he could escape this world by retreating to the misty world of pagan mythology. We, in turn, are not going to attract better minds to the study of literature by lamenting these evil days and by longing

for sight of old Proteus and for sound of old Triton. We are not going to attract better minds to the study of literature by ridiculing the new-fangled "social sciences" or by envying the physical sciences.

Let me repeat the unpleasant fact that we are not attracting the best minds among our undergraduate and graduate students. I found emphatic confirmation of this fact only last month when I helped apportion graduate fellowships and scholarships for the coming academic year. Our committee found that the department of chemistry had recommended more candidates than had all the other departments in the university put together. The chemists had evidently done their selection carefully; their candidates were graded in nine classes. We soon found that the records and recommendations of the lower classes—IX, VIII, and VII—compared favorably with the average records and recommendations of candidates in English, German, French, history, and philosophy. (I mercifully pass over the candidates in classics.) Two of the committee looked further and higher in the list of a hundred would-be chemists. I did not, for I knew what they would find, and I was already convinced.

One might argue that this particular situation is peculiar to the University of Illinois, where the department of chemistry is unusually strong. Granted; but the picture elsewhere, I believe, would differ only in that physics or zoölogy or engineering, instead of chemistry, would lead all the rest. I do not believe that candidates in English today would lead any list in any first-rate university in the country.

What is going to happen, then? Will the study of English literature follow the downward path of its parent classical studies? I believe that it is already on

that downward path and that it will continue if the teachers of English do not stop yearning for vanished glory and try to build something that our students want, or think they want, as much as they now seem to want chemistry and physics and "personnel management." I believe we need a new type of teacher.

Two experiments today may offer some help. Until we are fully convinced that our decline and fall are inevitable, we might well look to them.

Robortelli enriched the study of poetry by reintroducing the aesthetic approach to literature. He did this without abandoning the tried and workable grammatical and rhetorical approach. Nowadays, in a good many colleges and universities, the freshman course in English is being revitalized by reintroducing the old approach of forensic rhetoric and without abandoning grammatical and literary study. In other words, the study of speech, or public speaking, has come to the rescue of freshman composition as, four hundred years ago, the study of literature came to the rescue of the oratorical scheme. This new course in both oral and written English seems to be enjoying a mounting success all over the country. Despite determined efforts to strangle it, it is pretty successful at the University of Illinois, where it goes under the name of "Verbal Expression," a four-hour course in speaking, reading, and writing. The Division of General Studies sponsors it, along with several other courses aiming at general education. Though I have never taught "Verbal Expression," I have seen many of its classes in action, and I can testify that it is much more alive than the conventional class in freshman composition. Its students learn to stand on their feet before the class and discuss subject matter before they write themes about it. Some of these discus-

sions are both lively and profitable. The students at least feel that they are learning something they need and can use. They are learning something about clear exposition and something about persuasion. Gone is the dreary routine of grudging themes on "Why I Came to Illinois" and "My First Day on the Campus."

Another experiment may offer more promise for the revival of the study of literature, and this is a course in "Literature and the Fine Arts," which is also enjoying a growing success in many colleges. The Division of General Studies at Illinois has offered such a course for the last five years. It meets four times a week and studies the arts of literature, music, painting, sculpture, and architecture. The course is not a survey; it does not try to trace the history of art from Egypt to Hollywood; it presents an analysis of art in general in terms of material, form, expression, and function and then proceeds to illustrate these basic qualities with concrete examples of literature, music, painting, sculpture, and architecture. At the very least, the students come to realize that there are important similarities, as well as differences, between all the arts. Most of the students continue in liberal-arts courses, many of them in the study of literature.

I must admit, however, that there are serious difficulties involved in "Verbal Expression" and "Literature and the Fine Arts." I am speaking now only of these courses at the University of Illinois; other colleges may have done better. The most serious difficulty, as usual, lies in providing a capable staff. Unfortunately, the supply of good teachers of public speaking is limited. Unfortunately, many teachers of our conventional English composition have had no training in speech; some of them have very poor speech themselves. Conse-

quently, the Division of General Studies, unable to find the right teachers, has been unable to expand the course in "Verbal Expression" to meet the demand. The difficulty of securing a properly trained staff in "Literature and the Fine Arts" is even more acute. So far the Division of General Studies has failed to find one man who is thoroughly competent to teach the whole course. Therefore, we have had to compromise; we have a man to teach the literature, and we have borrowed two men from the College of Fine Arts to teach the other arts. The College of Fine Arts has been glad to lend these men, whose sojourn in the College of Liberal Arts and Sciences has improved relations between the two colleges; but the course, I believe, has suffered from a lack of unified command. Theoretically all three men are supposed to fit themselves to teach any and all parts of the course. In practice, however, the teacher of literature often forgets about music when he is discussing poetry, and the teacher of music seldom remembers to cite apt parallels from the arts of painting and architecture. All three of these men, to be sure, have been trained in the conventional way; they are specialists. What both these courses need, in my opinion, are young men and women with much broader training than our graduate schools now offer. Until there are the right teachers, these experimental courses in general education will never be able to prove that they are the right answer, or a right answer, to our question, "Can the study of literature be revived?"

Perhaps there are other methods as yet untried which may yet revive the study of literature. I seriously doubt, however, that there are any new, untried methods in education; I suspect that all have been tried at one time or another.

Certainly manpower is more important than any methods or schemes of study. No remedy will succeed which does not include a determined effort to secure better young teachers and better students, who, in turn, will become the teachers.

How can the manpower in our departments of literature be revived? I admit that the task is both difficult and complex. I should like to offer three suggestions, however.

First, I think that we might start with an improved use of what departmental manpower we now have. Nowadays, in most colleges and universities, a good share of the departmental energy, and money, is directed toward manning dozens, even hundreds, of sections of freshman composition. It is high time, I think, that departments of English spend more energy, and more money, in securing promising young teachers of literature. It is high time, I think, that departments of English quit loading promising young graduate assistants with three and four sections of freshman composition, with the inevitable result that these promising young people are worn out by the time they receive their Doctor's degrees and are ready for their lifework.

Second, since many of the ineptitudes in our teaching of literature today are the inevitable result of narrow departmentalism, we might do away with departments. We might ask all teachers of literature, classical, English, French, German, Spanish, Italian, Russian, to work together instead of against one another. At the very least, such a move might remove many of the petty jealousies that now hamper all of us. If all teachers of literature were working together and not against one another, the classicist might stop fretting about the large enrolment

in English X ("The History of the Drama"), the teacher of French might stop worrying about the "inroads" of Spanish. The teachers of English might derive some benefit; the Chaucerian might view with less alarm the new course in the American novel, and the teacher of American literature might learn something from his classical colleagues. Such a move would surely encourage tolerance and a broader conception of literature; it might strengthen the union of the liberal arts.

Third, and more practical because it offers a surer solution of the fundamental problem of better manpower, we ought to establish a new type of graduate training for a new type of teacher. I have seen sophomores in the Division of General Studies at Illinois become eager students of literature and the allied fine arts. At the beginning of their junior year they would ask, "How can I get more work of this kind? What about the advanced courses in literature? Are there any courses in art? How about music?" What happened? Their enthusiasm was soon blunted by the old routine of departmental "major" and "minor," by twenty semester-hours of major departmental courses plus twenty semester-hours of minor departmental courses. What happened to the few who went on to the graduate school? I met two of them on the campus not long ago, both first-rate students. One of them was working for an advanced degree in geology. The other was studying botany. The sophomore's awakened interest in literature had faded during the junior and senior years, and there was nothing in our graduate program to attract him. Is there any good reason, however, why there should not be graduate work in literature that will attract such students? If a sophomore course in "Literature and the Fine Arts"

attracts some of the best undergraduates in the college, why cannot similar courses be established at higher levels? A rich field of study is there, ready for cultivation, ready to provide a broad and sound training for a better teacher of literature. If the study of painting, architecture, and music enriches the introductory course in literature, will not further, more intensive study of the fine arts enrich the advanced course in "Elizabethan Literature" or in "American Literature"? And I see no reason why this broader study of literature should not be extended to some graduate courses without any total sacrifice of training in research.

I realize that these suggestions strike at the very roots of our vested interests. The modern academic department in a large university is highly organized and jealous of its privileges. More often than not, the department draws its graduate students from its staff of freshman composition. If we did away with graduate assistants, what would happen to our graduate work? If we did away with departments, what would happen to the budget? If we established a new kind of graduate training, what would happen to our old graduate courses and teachers? Appalling as these questions may appear to many teachers, and administrators, there are already signs of just such revolutionary changes. There are indications that the departmental compartments are breaking up. There are indications of strong dissatisfaction with the present inefficient method of conducting our elementary courses. At least two great universities, Columbia and Harvard, have tried to abolish freshman composition as a required course; they have acknowledged that the responsibility for undergraduate illiteracy rests upon the whole university and that it is

not the peculiar privilege or cross of the department of English. At least two great universities, Harvard and Minnesota, seem to be making some effort to broaden the training of graduate students of literature. Though hopeful, these signs by no means insure any widespread reform or any general realization that the study of literature must be revived if it is to survive.

Perhaps I am unduly pessimistic. Perhaps I exaggerate our own failings. Perhaps I, too, have fallen victim to the gloom now surrounding the humanities. It may be that forces beyond our control are working against us. It may be that we are caught in a cycle and that the wheel has now swung to the age of brass in literary studies. Until we are sure, however, that we are inevitably destined to follow the classicists into eclipse, we

might at least make some effort to improve. If we do not try to improve, if we do not revive our manpower, then we shall see no revival of the study of literature. Instead, we may expect a presidential address at the Modern Language Association or at the National Council of Teachers of English which will echo Professor Bowra's address before the British Classical Association on the decline and fall of classical education. The academic descendants of Erasmus, Robortelli, Bentley, Boeckh, Gildersleeve, and Gilbert Murray have failed because they waited until it was too late for a revival of classical studies. Have we any sound reason to believe that the academic descendants of Child, A. S. Cook, Kittredge, and Manly will succeed if they, too, wait to see what happens? After all, "If gold ruste, what shal iren do?"

On Teaching the Sentence Outline

H. V. S. OGDEN¹

FEW students come to college today knowing how to outline. Fewer still understand why outlining is valuable. So it may not be amiss to consider how the teaching of the sentence outline may be carried out and how a knowledge of outlining can be useful to the student.²

To begin with, the teacher will do well to emphasize that outlining is a tool which the student will use both in constructing his own themes and in reading printed essays and articles. He will use the outline to give unity and direction to

his themes, to help him "stick to the subject." He will also use it to help him grasp the full meaning of what he reads, to help him follow a writer's meaning without getting lost in a maze of sentences. The teacher will probably do well to ignore the limitations of outlining for the time being, although he should be aware of them himself. The sentence outline is chiefly useful for analyzing articles or essays the purpose of which is to communicate clearly, to explain, or to persuade rationally. It is not necessarily useful in putting together a theme or in analyzing an essay in which the purpose is to evoke emotions or to persuade by playing on the reader's feelings. If someone questions whether a piece of writing

¹ University of Michigan.

² I wish to express my thanks to my colleagues, Martin Bertram, Edward Calver, Morris Greenhut, George Helm, David Stocking, and Carlton Wells, for reading the manuscript of this article and making corrections and suggestions.

which cannot be outlined is necessarily bad, the answer depends on the kind of writing it is. If it is meant to communicate ideas or information clearly, it is not so good as it might be if it is not amenable to the kind of analysis underlying the sentence outline. It may be good evocation, but it cannot be perfect communication.

With this as a brief introduction, the teacher should present the notion of the thesis sentence. This is a one-sentence statement of what the whole essay is meant to show, prove, or explain. This is the basic concept in outlining. An essay should have unity and coherence. If it has, the unifying idea can be stated in one sentence—the thesis sentence. Or perhaps a better way of saying the same thing is this: An essay should answer some one question. The thesis sentence is a one-sentence answer to this question. The first assignment should be to read a short article, such as a carefully chosen column by Samuel Grafton or a *Reader's Digest* article and to write out the thesis sentence. After one or more reading assignments to give the student practice in thinking out thesis sentences, he should write a short theme, in which his mind (and his reader's) is firmly focused on his thesis. The teacher should mark this theme according to the student's success in attaining that end. The student must, of course, write his thesis sentence out on paper before he begins to write his theme.

Next the student should be taught to discriminate between poor thesis sentences and good ones. A good thesis sentence is a short, precise statement of exactly what the whole essay or article is meant to show. Grammatically, it may be a simple sentence: "American policy in Germany is too lenient toward professed Nazis." It may be a complex sen-

tence: "Because the Germans will never realize their war-guilt without suffering, American policy in Germany should be stern." In a complex sentence the real thesis is expressed in the main clause. Compound sentences do not usually make good thesis sentences, because they fail to show the proper relationship between the two ideas expressed: "The Germans will never realize their war-guilt without suffering, and the American policy in Germany should be stern." A simple sentence with a compound predicate may make a satisfactory thesis sentence, especially if the predicates are antithetical: "A ruler should maintain the appearance of virtue but, whenever expedient, should not scruple to be ruthless and treacherous." For the beginner the simple sentence is best, especially since it forces him to focus on the essential idea of an essay without considering complicating relationships. For a more advanced student, however, the more complicated thesis sentence has the advantage of being more accurate. Drill in thesis sentences of this sort has an important incidental advantage. The student can be made to see the relationship between grammar and meaning—a relationship commonly overlooked in the teaching of grammar in our schools.

When the student has grasped the concept of a thesis sentence, he should go on to the process of dividing the essay into parts. This process can best be taught by asking the student to imagine that the whole essay is printed on one long strip of galley proof or that it is a single long newspaper column. The main divisions could then be drawn with a pencil, or, quite literally, the essay could be cut up into main parts with a pair of scissors. The advantage of suggesting such a literal cutting-up process is that it impresses on the student the fact that the

dividing is a real process and that he is dividing the essay as it stands, not re-organizing it in his outline according to some plan of his own. Usually it is easy to see how an essay or article divides into main parts. It is harder to write a single sentence which says what each one of these parts is meant to show, prove, or explain. To reduce a group of paragraphs to one sentence takes hard thinking. The student will be inclined to take some sentence from the printed essay and put it into his outline under the impression that the author has supplied him with a satisfactory main heading. Actually, it is unlikely that the author has written a single sentence summing up one of his main sections. The student will have to think out his own main headings. This is a valuable discipline in thinking, in diction, and in sentence structure.

Here is an outline of the sort the student should make at this stage. Note that it is short. The work should consist in thinking out accurate sentences, not in writing out a lot of words:

Thesis sentence: Labor unions do not wield excessive power in our economy.

- I. The power of unions is merely a negative power of stopping production.
- II. This power is severely limited by public opinion as it is molded by newspapers and radio commentators.
- III. This power is even more limited by workers' need for earning their daily living.
- IV. Management's power to hire, promote, transfer, discharge, and shut down is a far greater positive power than the workers' power derived from striking.

When the student is able to make such an outline as this, he has learned the essential nature of outlining. Allowing time for the reading of one or two essays and the writing of a second theme, he should be this far along by the end of the second week. The next step is to make sure he

understands the relationship between the sentences in his outline. The Roman numeral sentences are *subordinate* to the thesis sentence. This means that the thesis sentence "contains" the subordinate main-heading sentences; it states or implies what they state more fully and less generally. Thus the main-heading sentences must "add up" to the thesis sentence. They are *co-ordinate* with one another. This means that the parts of the essay which they represent in the outline are of equal significance in the organization of the essay, though often differing considerably in length. Furthermore, they all have the same relationship to the thesis sentence to which they are subordinate. The student must understand what the terms "subordinate" and "co-ordinate" mean, and he must realize that the symbols in the outline indicate these relationships. Badly taught students assume that the symbols are more or less meaningless and that their use constitutes an easy gesture of compliance to pedagogical tradition. The symbols are useless unless they have meaning, and, aside from indicating sequence, their meaning lies in the relationships of subordination and co-ordination.

By the time the teacher has reached this point, two matters are likely to come up for discussion which must be dealt with firmly. One of the students will probably say that he has been taught to outline by dividing his material into an introduction, a body, and a conclusion. As an aid to reading and writing, such a threefold analysis suffers from one disadvantage: it fails to throw any light on the "body" of the essay, the main part. It could be dismissed at once, if it did not raise the question of what happens to the introduction and the conclusion of an essay in an analytical sentence outline of the kind here discussed. The answer is

that they can usually be ignored. The introduction may, if one wishes, be included, but it is not a part of the essay in the sense that the main divisions are parts. It is not subordinate to the thesis sentence or co-ordinate with the main parts. As for the conclusion, the thesis sentence is itself the conclusion of the essay, in the sense that the conclusion is what the essay is meant to show or prove. Its place is at the beginning of the outline with the label "Thesis Sentence." Any other concluding remarks at the end of the essay have as their function only the communication of finality, the function of telling the reader that the essay is now ending. Such remarks need no place in an outline.

A second question which is pretty certain to be raised is the matter of the topic outline. Why must the sentences be full sentences? Is not a topic outline just as good? A topic outline is just as good as a sentence outline, provided that the person making the outline and the person reading it know what the topics mean as fully and as accurately as if the topics were expanded to full sentences. This never happens. The student making the outline will think out his ideas fully and accurately only if he is required to express them in full sentences. And the reader, whether the teacher or the student using his own outline, cannot get a complete and precise perception of the relationships expressed in an outline unless the ideas are stated explicitly in grammatical sentences with precisely worded subjects and predicates. This will be clearer still when we come to the matters of parallelism and paragraphing. So the teacher should insist on complete sentences in outlines and should reject outlines substituting topics and phrases for sentences.

Having settled these two questions

and having taught the student the basic principles of outlining, the teacher may now assign a fuller sentence outline, in which the subordination is carried a step or two further. Since this is nothing but the application of the same process of dividing and writing one sentence for each division, it is easy to explain to him. What the thesis sentence is to the main headings, the main headings are to the subheadings. A word of warning to teacher and student is here necessary. There is a danger of defeating the purpose of outlining by carrying the subordination too far. A conscientious student may turn in a long outline with capital letters subordinate to Roman numerals, Arabic numerals to capital letters, small letters to Arabic numerals, and Greek letters subordinate to Arabic numerals. This is good only if the student does not lose sight of the essay as a whole and its larger divisions. A poor student will substitute a lot of handwriting arranged under plausible symbols for good analysis. And an overworked teacher may be taken in. A short outline with precisely worded headings which constitute an exact analysis is better than a diffuse outline which lacks precision and accuracy.

While the teacher is teaching the process of subdividing the main sections and writing subheadings, he may make an opportunity to explain why there cannot be a I without a II, an A without a B, in an outline. When something is divided into parts, it must be divided into at least two parts. A pie cannot be cut up into one: a generous woman may cut it into two pieces, a stingy woman into twelve. If it is divided, there will be at least two pieces. If a main division of an essay is divided into subparts, there must be at least two subparts. When a student feels that an A is convenient without a

B, he will usually find that the main-heading sentence can easily be changed to include the subordinate sentence. For example:

- I. Movies usually ignore economic and social problems.

A. Labor problems are rarely depicted.

This can probably be handled completely in one sentence:

- I. Movies usually ignore labor problems.

If the student really has more to say, it will take some such form as this:

- I. Movies usually ignore economic and social problems.

A. Labor problems are rarely depicted.

B. Unemployment is ignored.

C. Race prejudice is either ignored or treated flippantly.

Students will often want to make single examples into subordinate sections:

- I. Many novels of the 1930's revealed the evils of our social system.

A. Steinbeck's *Grapes of Wrath* is an example.

This can be handled as follows:

- I. Many novels of the 1930's, such as Steinbeck's *Grapes of Wrath*, revealed the evils of our social system.

A much more important principle in outlining than this is the principle of parallelism. When the parts of an essay are parallel functionally, the main headings in the outline should make this clear by parallel sentence structure. In the short outline on the power of unions given above, all four main-heading sentences have the word "power" as subject, and the parallelism of points II and III goes further. Such parallelism calls for repetition both of sentence pattern and of diction. One of the superstitions sedulously cultivated by some composition teachers is the notion that all repetition in writing is bad. On the contrary, nothing is more helpful in revealing

and emphasizing parallel relationships, whether in an outline or in an essay, than the repetition of key terms and of sentence patterns. Here is part of an outline illustrating the principle of parallelism:

- I. The educational systems of China, Japan, England, and America were bad, because they inculcated the wrong attitude toward knowledge or because they developed the pupil as a means for some external end.

A. Notwithstanding certain excellences of Chinese culture, the Chinese educational system was bad because it inculcated intellectual skepticism.

1. Chinese education succeeded in producing social stability and artistic excellence.

2. But, by teaching that no knowledge is certain, it fostered an elegant skepticism at the expense of intellectual energy and scientific progress.

B. The Japanese educational system was bad, because it taught an unscientific dogmatism and because it developed the pupils as means to Japanese imperial expansion.

1. Japanese students were taught to accept unquestioningly various social and political beliefs, such as the divinity of the Mikado, with the result that the spirit of free inquiry was not possible.

2. Japanese students were taught to accept the principle of the supremacy of the state over the individual, with the result that they accepted their parts in the program of military expansion without questioning.

C. The English public school system was bad because it developed intellectual rigidity and because it taught the pupil to regard imperial responsibility as his main goal in life.

1. The English public school man possessed high standards of rectitude but lacked the intellectual flexibility to adapt these standards to changing times and to differing peoples.

2. He was taught to regard himself as the tool of British imperial administration, with the result that he cultivated imperialistic attitudes at the expense of perceptiveness and sensitivity.

D. The American school system was bad because it regarded individual pupils as the means to creating a homogeneous nation at the expense of developing the pupils' individual natures.

1. In serving as the agent of the melting-pot program, the American educational system sacrificed the individual needs of the pupils in order to produce a homogeneous product.
2. It exaggerated America's achievements and depreciated Europe's excellences in a dogmatic way, in order to make its pupils share an exclusively American patriotism.

If this seems excessively repetitious, note that what is repeated is the main idea of the essay. The outliner is never permitted to lose sight of the central thought. Moreover, the defects which these four educational systems are alleged to have in common are stated in the main heading; the two basic principles (the right attitude toward knowledge and the proper attitude toward the student) underlie the whole criticism of these educational systems and quite rightly appear in the main heading (I) as well as the subheadings (A, B, C, D). The parallelism of the four parts is emphasized by the parallelism of the A, B, C, D, sentences.

Perhaps another week of assignments is sufficient to carry the student through reading and writing assignments which afford him drill in the principle of parallelism in the outline. The teacher must be sure to outline every essay for himself before he assigns it. Much that is printed is badly written, and outlining a badly organized essay (though it reveals the weakness as nothing else can) is usually difficult and confusing.

Having learned the principle of parallelism, the student has finished his study of the outline itself. He is now ready to study the relationship between outlining and paragraphing, a subject which takes

him into the art of paragraph-writing. The use of the outline in building one's paragraphs is usually overlooked. Yet it is one of the most fruitful uses of the outline. Handbooks of rhetoric and composition are given to defining the paragraph as a group of sentences which deal with some one "phase" or "aspect" of the subject. Docile students will accept this information, but it does them no good unless they know what an "aspect" or a "phase" of their subject is. The only way to find out is to divide the subject into parts (not "phases" or "aspects"). When one does this, one is making the basic operation of outlining. Consider the short outline on the power of labor unions which was given earlier. Here there are four main parts. If a student were writing a short paper, such as he might write in a single class hour as an impromptu exercise, he would do well to have four paragraphs, one for each main part, plus an additional paragraph for an introduction. For *this* theme, each paragraph is a group of sentences developing the idea of one of the main-heading sentences. What if the student were writing a longer essay on the subject? Then he would need to make a fuller outline with subordinate headings, and he could not tell how to build his paragraphs or how many paragraphs there would be until he had done so. If a student were writing an essay based on the outline about the four systems of education, he would have an introductory paragraph followed by eight paragraphs, each one a group of sentences dealing with the idea expressed in each of the eight subordinate sentences. Generally speaking, the paragraphs should correspond to sections in the outline—in short essays to main sections, in longer essays to subordinate headings.

Furthermore, the handbooks tell us

(quite rightly) that paragraphs should have topic sentences. What is the relationship between the sentences in the outline and the topic sentences of the paragraphs in the student's essay? If the student is writing a short essay based on the outline on the power of labor unions, the four main-heading sentences will become the topic sentences of the four paragraphs constituting the body of the theme. Not that the student should take them mechanically from the outline and begin each of his paragraphs with one of them. He must adapt them to their place in an essay, changing them to meet the exigencies of his transitions and to maintain the continuity of his discourse. But for this theme the essential idea of each paragraph is to be found in the main-heading sentences of the outline. A question now arises about the main-heading sentences in an outline when the theme is to be written on a larger scale, as, for example, the theme of nine paragraphs on the four systems of education. Here the eight subordinate sentences become the topic sentences of the paragraphs. The

main-headings sentences (A, B, C, D) still serve a function, in that they group the paragraphs into a series of four pairs. For example, the two paragraphs dealing with Chinese education fall together as a pair. The A sentence may appear in the essay at the beginning of the first of these two paragraphs in a form adapted to serve the function of grouping the two paragraphs together. And so with the B, C, D, sentences. But perhaps this is pressing the matter too far. The important relationship is the relationship between the topic sentences of the paragraphs and those sentences in the outline from the level of subordination suitable for the length of theme desired. This is the first step in building a good paragraph. Just how long the teacher should spend in teaching the relationship of outlining to paragraphing he can best judge for himself. It is not something to teach for a few weeks and then drop for the rest of the course. Skill in analysis, skill in the technique of outlining, and skill in building paragraphs are to be achieved only by effort covering a long span of time.

Punctuating Nonrestrictives

W. PAUL JONES¹

EVERY year teachers of English composition patiently explain the difference between restrictive and nonrestrictive modifiers and then ruthlessly red-ink every failure to punctuate them according to the rule. If the modifier restricts or limits, if it means "that particular one," if it can't be left out without changing the meaning of the rest of the sentence, then it is restrictive and must not be set off by commas, say the "authorities." If it is merely descriptive, if it can be

omitted without a change of meaning, then it is nonrestrictive and must be set off.

So far as I have observed, the textbooks are unanimous. And, in the main, the writers and publishers seem to agree with the authors of textbooks. But any reader with a sharp eye for pointing will have noted that frequently the rule is not observed, sometimes, of course, because of ignorance or carelessness but sometimes, too, with deliberate intent.

I think that these variants, especially

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the omission of points with nonrestrictives, are too common to be casually ignored. To paraphrase Robert Louis Stevenson, it is certain that much may be judiciously argued in favor of the rule; only there is something to be said against it—and that is what I want to say.

THE TENDENCY TOWARD OPEN PUNCTUATION

The open pointing of nonrestrictive modifiers is in keeping with the general tendency toward open punctuation. Professor George Summey noted the trend as early as 1919 in his excellent book *Modern Punctuation*: "Modern preference favors the use of the fewest and least obtrusive marks that will do the required work." Sterling A. Leonard, in *Current English Usage* (1932), likewise concluded that there is "a clear tendency for less and lighter pointing—less even than our most liberal courses of study have listed." The trend is so well established that reference books now express it in broad generalizations. The United States Government Printing Office *Style Manual* (1939) reads:

If the use of a punctuation mark is in doubt, the question to be asked is "Why?" rather than "Why not?" If doubt persists, the mark should be omitted to aid the smooth flow of words. Marks interrupt. They are needed only to make the thought clearer or to facilitate oral expression. Beyond that they are detrimental to speed, ease, and exactness of understanding.

Gordon V. Carey, in *Mind the Stop* (1939), wrote:

Modern economy in punctuation is tending toward the omission of commas even with subordinate clauses where no ambiguity can result (and occasionally where it can . . .).

There is a trend not only toward the use of fewer marks but also toward more individual freedom in their use. Arthur G. Kennedy, in *English Usage* (1942), says:

Punctuation is, of all the phases of usage, the most personal, primarily because it is used to increase clarity and emphasis in the expression of thinking. It is, therefore, most flexible and varied. Writers range from an almost complete disuse of marks of punctuation to an extreme in which the sentence is broken into innumerable little fragments. To establish a uniform practice on the part of writers in general is an impossible ideal; for to ask an individual to employ punctuation with consistent uniformity is to demand a procedure inconsistent with fine, discriminating writing.

OPINIONS OF WILSON AND SUMMEY

These general trends toward fewer marks and greater freedom in the use of marks may explain some of the variants so frequent in contemporary usage. But it is worth remembering that long ago George Wilson, whose *Treatise on Punctuation*—first edition 1826—was the first systematic examination of the subject, noted some exceptions to the general rule for pointing restrictive and nonrestrictive modifiers:

When . . . the antecedent [of a relative clause] consists of nouns or phrases between which commas are required, a comma should also be inserted before the relative clause, though restrictive; as, "There are many dreams, fictions, or theories, *which* men substitute for the truth." Were the comma after "theories" omitted, the connection between "which" and the preceding noun would seem to be closer than that existing between the relative pronoun and the other particulars, to which it has an equal relation; and such an omission would, in many instances, tend to hinder a perception of the sense.

A comma may also be put before the relative pronoun, even when restrictive, if it is immediately followed by a word or an expression enclosed by commas, and especially if the antecedent is qualified by an adjective; as, "It was only a few *discerning* friends, *who*, in the native vigor of his powers, perceived the dawn of Robertson's future eminence." The reasons offered for this mode of punctuation are, that the adjective has some effect to loosen the restraining power of the relative over the antecedent; and that the omission of the comma between the two portions of such a sentence—between

"friends" and "who" in the present example—would draw the pronoun more closely to the clause which precedes it, than to that of which it forms a part.

By some writers and printers, a comma is always put before the relative, though used restrictively, if separated by several words from its grammatical antecedent; as, "It is *power* of thought and utterance, which immortalizes the products of genius."—"He preaches sublimely, who lives a righteous and pious life." But we have little hesitation in saying, that the punctuation in both examples is erroneous. . . .

To prevent ambiguity, a comma is sometimes put before the words, *of which, of whom*, even when used restrictively, to distinguish the preposition from that which connects two nouns, one of which governs the other; as, "Compassion is an emotion, *of which* you should never be ashamed."—"No thought can be just, *of which* good sense is not the groundwork."—"No thought, *of which* good sense is not the groundwork, can be just." The insertion of the point will distinguish phrases of this kind from such as occur in the following sentences: "Compassion is an *emotion of grief* for the sufferings of others."—"The actions of princes are like those great rivers, the *courses of which* everyone beholds, but whose springs have been seen by few."

Most of the sentences quoted by Wilson would now be punctuated according to the conventional rule. Summey, in *Modern Punctuation*, however, says:

The distinction between restrictive and non-restrictive is of the utmost importance, but for purposes of punctuation is not always decisive. The character of a group as restrictive or otherwise does not always determine pointing even when clear; and many modifiers, especially adverbs, are difficult to classify.

In the following sentences groups which seem clearly nonrestrictive are properly left open:

Which has proved wiser, as we look back, Johnson who ridiculed Gray's poetry, or Boswell who sat up all night reading it?—JOHN BAILEY, *Dr. Johnson and His Circle*, p. 66.

Quite late in the Anglo-Saxon period—about the year 1000—there is a poem on an English subject in which this heroic spirit is most thoroughly displayed; the poem on the Battle of Maldon which was fought on

the Essex shore in 993 between Byrhtnoth alderman of East Anglia and a host of Vikings whose leader (though he is not mentioned in the poem) is known as Olaf Tryggvason.—W. P. KER, *English Literature: Medieval*, p. 38.

Our knowledge of these people in the first century of our era is drawn from Roman writers, from Julius Caesar who fought against them, and from Tacitus, who described them in his *Germania* (written in 98) and *Annals*.—J. G. ROBERTSON, *Outlines of the History of German Literature*, p. 4.

In the last sentence the two relative clauses, though superficially parallel, are treated in different ways.

In the following sentence a restrictive group is pointed off:

We have all of late been made familiar with the somewhat unfortunate remark of an English writer, that the spelling of Shakespeare was good enough for him.—THOMAS R. LOUNSBURY, *English Spelling and Spelling Reform*, p. 24.

But these cases are out of the ordinary. As a rule modifiers clearly restrictive are grouped with the principal elements, and non-restrictives are grouped separately. When a modifier is on the border line between classes, the writer must decide the case on its merits.

Other things equal, the open restrictive group is lighter and more rapid. The pointing of a modifier affects at once the movement, the grouping, the distribution of emphasis.

It is clear that both Wilson and Summey recognized cases where the rule does not necessarily apply.

EVIDENCE FROM CONTEMPORARY USAGE

To support Wilson and Summey and incidentally to confound the textbook writers, many of whom, I suspect, frame their rules without much reference to actual usage, I submit the evidence in the quotations below. Most of these are sentences in which a nonrestrictive relative clause modifying a noun has not been set off by commas. Only rarely will the reader find a restrictive clause set off.

Though the tendency to eliminate needless pointing may be a sufficient ex-

planation of most of the variants, it seems to me that there are at least four other possible explanations:

1. *The relative clause, though it does not restrict, supplies additional identifying details which make it something more than purely descriptive.* In the following sentence from *Life*, a magazine which is unusually attentive to topographical details, "The wealthiest Californians cannot absorb any more of it [sunshine] than the Loeffler family of Glendale whose income is \$3000 a year," the relative clause is not restrictive, yet it helps to identify *family* in somewhat the same way that *Loeffler* and *of Glendale* do. If the phrase "with an income of \$3000 a year" were substituted for the clause, no comma would be required.

In the following passage from a review by Henry Seidel Canby in the *Book-of-the-Month Club News*, three nonrestrictive clauses are not pointed, again perhaps because they supply additional identifying details:

She was the sister of the town's two bankers who had adjoining offices and tried to hang him up between them on an impossible mortgage. . . . This meant an artesian well which went as far as it could go without being ruinous before it found water. . . . Whereas the ledge of rock . . . covered a spring which they had to operate on at large expense.

2. *The movement of the sentence would be slowed down if the clause were set off by commas.* In the following sentence by Fulton John Sheen from an article in the *Saturday Review of Literature*—"The result is that science which was supposed to be our servant is now our master"—though the relative clause is obviously nonrestrictive, the rapid reading of the sentence needed to emphasize the contrast between *servant* and *master* would be interrupted by any pointing. The effect is much the same as writing "Science is not our servant but our master."

Similarly, in the following sentence from Ray Stannard Baker's *American Chronicle*—"Why don't some of the farmers move out to Polk County where a plow will strike into the ground without rasping on a rock?"—a comma would tend to interrupt the flow of a sentence intended to be read without pause.

3. *The effect of "sprinkled" commas would result if the nonrestrictive clause were pointed.* In the following sentence from *Life*—"He has a wife, Joyce, and two daughters, Lynanne who is 5 and Janne who is 2½"—setting off the two short adjective clauses would result in a sentence with six commas instead of three, a sentence chopped into such small segments that its life would be pretty well destroyed.

To set off the nonrestrictive appositives and adjective clauses in the following sentence by Thomas Sugrue from the *Saturday Review of Literature*—"There are the daughters Mitzi and Georgette, the small sons Toti and Coco, Uncle Jocko who understands machinery and enjoys alcohol, Pierre who is a grown son and rides horses . . ."—would require four additional commas and give the effect of sprinkled points.

4. *The adjective clause is logically the equivalent of a causal clause.* In the following sentence from *Newsweek*—"He has asked that it be approved before mid-July when the 'Big Three' are to meet in the vicinity of Boston"—the "when" clause is equivalent to an adverbial clause beginning with "because."

In the following sentence from the *Des Moines Register*—"He is strong for his friends, including Jimmie Pendergast who got him started in politics"—the "who" clause explains why "he" is strong for his friend; if the clause began with "because," no comma would be expected.

ADDITIONAL MISCELLANEOUS EXAMPLES

Below are additional examples of the open punctuation of nonrestrictive modifiers taken from a variety of sources:

It has a five-year lease on Willow Run where airplanes have been built but never an automobile.—WILLIAM CHAPMAN WHITE.

. . . the last-war soldiers' bonus which Congress in 1936 awarded to more than 3,500,000 veterans over President Roosevelt's veto.—*Newsweek*.

She would squabble with Lamartine who had spoken unkindly of Byron and misquoted her confidences.—LEONARD BACON.

The love-relation between Ravic and Joan which, of course, develops disastrously (there are no happy endings, in Europe today) is paralleled by a hate-theme which develops fortunately.—CLIFTON FADIMAN.

He joined his family in Ottumwa where they intend to continue living.—Des Moines Register.

Carroll Towle who makes English sing at Durham. . . —EDWARD WEEKS, *Atlantic Monthly*.

The boy graduated along with his classmates who had been growing steadily closer together, however varied their temperaments and personalities.—BURGES JOHNSON, *Campus versus Classroom*.

She had large eyes which were not bright.—HENRY JAMES, *The Aspern Papers*.

Mr. Travers had a heavy and rather long chin which he shaved.—JOSEPH CONRAD, *The Rescue*.

Dona Clara was in the hands of malignant Nature who reserves the right to inflict upon her children the most terrifying jests.—THORNTON WILDER, *The Bridge of San Luis Rey*.

And there was Charles Augustin Sainte-Beuve who dug for biological and critical facts with all the patience of an expert.—OSCAR CARGILL, *Intellectual America*.

Mechanical invention which had greatly increased the output of yarn and cloth had left the finishing section practically untouched.—DOUGLAS W. HILL, *The Impact and Value of Science*.

King Vidor who directed "An American Romance" had bridged the span.—Advertisement, Metro-Goldwyn-Mayer, *Saturday Evening Post*.

CONCLUSION

If the instructor believes that all these examples are merely violations of the rule, due either to ignorance or to oversights in proofreading, he will, of course, continue to red-ink all such pointing as wrong. But if he regards the examples as indicative of a trend in usage and thinks that rules are nothing but generalizations from the practice of good writers, he may allow the student to make justifiable exceptions.

Triolet: "Under the Right Persuasion"

The reading of his best work requires attention and patience, but it may be, "under the right persuasion," an immensely rewarding experience.—RANDALL STEWART.

I shall read Henry James
On sabbatical leave.
Among other great names,
I shall read Henry James
With his elegant dames
When there's time to perceive:
I shall read Henry James
On sabbatical leave.

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Round Table

"WHAT 'WAR OF THE THEATRES'?"

Many readers will find Professor Halstead's paper, "What 'War of the Theatres'?" in the May, 1948, issue,¹ stimulating and sound. His suggestion that the average Elizabethan theatergoer was not concerned with critical standards, or interested in the "quarrels" of rival dramatists, will perhaps be generally accepted, but there is also the possibility that a group (we do not know how large) followed the work of the playwrights, noted that Jonson's comedies, on the classical model, differed from those of most of his contemporaries, and read Jonson's prologues and dedications, in which he set forth his theories of dramatic art. Non-dramatic satire has always had an audience—even when it is personal—and the "present-day radio feuds," to which Mr. Halstead makes allusion, seem to entertain the modern public. Critics appeared (not without parody) in *The Rehearsal*, Sheridan's *Critic*, and Shaw's *Fanny's First Play*—where, I understand, the critics were made up to represent contemporary London critics, a detail not fully appreciated in New York, where the individuals portrayed were not known as they were by the London audiences. Surely some of the Elizabethan theatergoers could enjoy critical quarrels, especially if they recognized the individuals concerned.

Another result of the "war" seems to have been that, perhaps unconsciously, Jonson shifted, as Mr. Neilson points out in his *Essentials of Poetry*, from classical to realistic satire. When one compares *Every Man in His Humour* with *Bartholomew Fair*, one can see how the dramatist has left Plautus for Hogarth. When he put definite individuals on the stage, even if he caricatured them, he left the type; perhaps he found that realistic satire was more effective than the more general classical satire.

¹ College English.

One wonders how sincere his contempt of the public may have been—how sincere Shaw's is. (Hazlitt's is certainly vehement.) If one has to compare Shaw with an Elizabethan, it is surely Jonson who comes to mind rather than Shakespeare (with whom Shaw likes to compare himself to show his superiority). One suspects sometimes that Shaw's characters are caricatures—or exaggerations, like Jonson's, in a Dickensian manner. One can understand why Jonson appealed to Dickens; but it was rather the later than the earlier Jonson; Dickens did not draw types—except, perhaps, in his "upper-class" people.

Valuable and accurate as Jonson's *obiter dicta* (as recorded by Drummond) may be, one sometimes questions the taste of the latter in publishing them. The casual post-prandial remarks of a guest (did Jonson know they were to be published?) are hardly to be stressed as carefully prepared comments; Mr. Halstead suggests that Jonson's mood at the moment may have colored his opinions when he expressed them. We can be glad (and sorry) that Shakespeare was not a guest of Drummond, led to characterize his contemporaries; but Fuller's comparison of the two (Shakespeare and Jonson) may throw light on what Shakespeare's views might have been. Webster's adjectives describing his fellows, in the famous Preface to his *White Devil*, were not casually chosen.

The collaboration of Jonson with his "enemies" both before and after the "war," indicates, as Mr. Halstead notes, the informal nature of the "feud." Again, its short duration suggests that, having said what they had to say, the dramatists declared peace. Again, public interest in such an affair is not likely to last long—radio comedians take notice—even if the attacks are more than "insult in evening dress" (as repartee has been defined), amusing as the hearers

find this for a while. If mutual advertising is back of the modern "feuds," we cannot be sure that the Elizabethans were alive to this kind of propaganda, though the adults may have "ganged up" on the children's companies in a kind of self-protection. Mr. Halstead's suggestion that the "war" developed from "friendly jibes" is somehow more convincing. The quarrel does not seem to have led to bitterness at the time, whatever stomachache Jonson might have developed *chez* Drummond.

For undergraduates the identity of the figures involved—if that can be satisfactorily discovered—is of less concern than these two results of the "war": the interest of at least some of the audience in critical debates and the growth of Jonson's art. It was rather as a realist than as a classical satirist that he influenced his successors, but, of course, the classical element is found in the Restoration drama, for which Jonson, Fletcher, Shirley, and others prepared the way, as well as the French playwrights. If the Shavian drama will influence the future, we can be sure that it will not be hair-raising in its effect—skirting, as it may, the razor's edge.

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UNTHEOLOGICAL GRACE

One of the most satisfying forms of literary appreciation, and perhaps the one most frequently requested by both student and teacher, is that derived from *explication de texte*. For this type of analysis Cleanth Brooks is most stimulating, and his article "Irony and 'Ironical' Poetry" (*College English*, February, 1948) should prove invigorating for the myriads of teachers who have presented Shakespeare's "Who Is Sylvia?" to their students.

Discussing the meaning of "grace" in this song, Mr. Brooks observes in a somewhat playful manner that it is "an odd motive for

the bestowal of grace—'that she might admired be.'" Refreshing as this observation is in its marginal brightening of Shakespeare's song, one wonders whether it properly construes the "irony" of the passage or whether, ironically enough, it misconstrues by reading in too much. Did Shakespeare intend the reader to think of actual, efficacious, or sanctifying grace, or should "grace" be understood more in the sense of "gracefulness"?

All readers would agree, I am sure, that their reaction to "Who Is Sylvia?" is quite different from their reaction to Lyly's "Cupid and Campaspe Played." The latter, while portraying Campaspe's beauty, is obviously *clever* verse and most of the reader's delight in the poem is in that very cleverness. In "Who Is Sylvia?" the reader is impressed with the beauty of Sylvia. The whole poem effuses beauty, not cleverness, in the portrait. Sylvia is a supremely beautiful girl physically and mentally, one to awe the admiring audience with her rare and delicate beauty. Consistent with this impression, "grace" suggests her poise of body, her stately walk, her graceful movements of hand, her slant of head, her every attractive posture. It should suggest, too, her clear, quiet speech, her graciousness, her goodness, her understanding, and is at once a synthesis of "Holy, fair, and wise," as well as an added development of the delineation. It makes her move as well as think and be. And the movement and thoughtfulness suggested portray a calm, seemingly sophisticated yet simple beauty that would arrest any swain then or now.

The use of "swain" adds weight to the suggestion that "grace" is intended primarily in the physical and mental but not theological meaning of the word. It is hard to imagine a "swain" being very much concerned with more than the appearance (the "looks") of a girl. It is hard to imagine him reflecting, "she must be in the state of grace, such is her beauty" or "her beauty is clearly a reflection of the divine grace God has filled her soul with." He might quite readily think she has *heavenly grace* in that she looks like a

goddess or an angel, that she walks and moves with uncommon gracefulness, that she meets and talks with others with ease, graciousness, and composure. His charm at her speech, graciousness, goodness, and understanding does in a sense take him into the realm of the spiritual, but it is hard to extend the connotation of "swain" to the point at which it might even remotely tie in with what is usually understood by theological considerations, however simple or superficial they may be.

The "integrity" of the poem, then, is preserved when "grace" is not considered theologically (perhaps "doctrinally" would be a better word), and the artistic need for organic unity is fulfilled more readily if "grace" is construed in the sense in which the "swain" might understand it than as a kind of actual, efficacious, or sanctifying grace. Along this latter line the argument might develop more conclusively by demonstrating the impossibility of *grace* obtaining in the particular context, since, as Mr. Brooks suggests, there is no motive for it. If it is insisted that "holy" affords reason for interpreting "grace" in a theological sense, such interpretation should limit itself to "sanctifying grace," but even this interpretation would lose for the portrayal of Sylvia all the graceful movement she acquires when one thinks of "grace" in the sense of gracefulness and graciousness.

I cannot help feeling a certain fascination for Mr. Brooks's interpretation of Shakespeare's song, but I hesitate to tie down "grace" to a theological meaning, least of all to an *actual grace* such as Mr. Brooks seems to be thinking of. Such *actual grace* does not lend any actual gracefulness to the delineation of Sylvia but rather for the moment delays the poet's sketching her picture, disrupts the continuity of thought, distracts by conjuring up visions of sin, *Pilgrim's Progress*, and salvation and is, as Mr. Brooks himself asserts, "quite untheological."

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THE GREAT BOOKS METHOD AND THE TEACHING OF ENGLISH

When I served as discussion leader for a Great Books course group, I was as much interested in the spontaneous, spirited participation of the group members in the discussion as I was in the variety of the ideas expressed by people who represented all trades and professions and all levels of educational achievement. I found myself wishing that such freedom and eagerness could be obtained in some of my classes in English; it seems that the more advanced the college student becomes, the less willing he is to voice his opinions.

I decided to begin using the method outlined by Mortimer Adler in his guidebook for discussion leaders¹ in my class in American literature; it seemed to me that the mere fact that the teacher was leading the discussions might be a cause of the students' self-conscious silence. After announcing to the class that we were going to try an experiment for the sake of giving some variety to the course, I asked one of the more intelligent and one of the less intelligent boys in the class to lead the discussion at the next meeting on Poe's short stories and his theories of composition. I explained to the students the procedure outlined by Mortimer Adler and requested that they master the material given them because all of them were potential leaders. The leaders were told that they were to consult me, if they so desired, relative to the questions on which they were to base the discussion. I emphasized the fact that I was not to be a participant in the discussion and that all leaders would be the "teachers" for the class meeting which they conducted.

When the class next met, the discussion leaders had arranged the chairs in the prescribed circle. When I entered, I gave them a nod, said nothing, and seated myself outside of the circle in the most inconspicuous spot in the room. The boys began the dis-

¹ Mortimer J. Adler, *Manual for Discussion Leaders* (Chicago, 1946).

cussion, and the class soon began to participate. As the meeting progressed, the discussion became enthusiastic; and I noticed that many who had not hitherto made contributions were contributing. The discussion leaders kept the students on the subject, and, when they did not pin down some student who had made general or incorrect statements, other members of the class did.

While I listened, I took notes on the discussion and gave particular attention to the points on which some of them fumbled in their interpretations or to the questions which seemed to be more or less unanswerable by the class as a whole. When I gave my lecture on Poe at the next meeting of the class, I sought to organize it about these gaps in knowledge that the students had evinced in the discussion. We have used the same technique of class discussion and then lecture for several weeks and I have been gratified by the increased interest, improved preparation and, subsequently, participation of the students. I have also been inordinately pleased by hearing groups of my students continuing the discussion in the hall when class has been dismissed.

If this method helps to arouse interest in the material being read, if it enables the student to express himself, if it inspires him to be better prepared on the material assigned, then why, I thought, would this not be an excellent device to use in a composition class? The crying need today is the development of the ability to think and to communicate thoughts. The paucity of thought in compositions written by students has seemed to be, in many instances, due to an inability to think, to a lack of knowledge, or to a lack of interest in the subject assigned. I had never been one who thought that one could expect satisfactory results if one assigned such composition subjects as "Trees" or "Flowers." The subject for a composition should be one closely allied with the student's experience or interests or one which correlated with the work he was doing or with the material being read in the book of essays. Now if a method could be used which would enable the students to have a discus-

sion of the subject to be written about later, the student's interest might be aroused, his thoughts might be clarified by participation in the discussion, and the content of his compositions might be improved.

In my advanced composition class we were reading and discussing *Essays for Our Time*, edited by Arno L. Bader and Carlton F. Wells,² and the next unit to be read dealt with teachers and educational problems. Once more I instituted the Great Books method, and in the discussion that followed, the students had an excellent time. Since part of the subject related to teachers, I am sure that the students were much freer in their expression than they would have been had I been standing before the class. I again took notes on the discussion, and I took the last ten minutes of the period to review hastily what had been said about different aspects of the problems discussed and to ask some questions that the students had not been able to answer or which they had fumbled with during the discussion. I then made composition assignments on two subjects, both of which had been suggested by the discussion.

I waited eagerly for the next meeting, at which the papers were to be handed in; I was pleased to note that almost all of them showed a marked improvement in organization, in clarity, and in content. We have continued to use this method, and I have noticed that some of the papers show that the students have sometimes become so interested that they have voluntarily done more reading on the subject.

This combination of methods has seemingly produced in the classes in which it has been used a greater informality, which is conducive to oral self-expression, a greater interest in the material being read, a better understanding of it, and better compositions as a result of the students' having given more thought to the subject assigned.

As I was leaving class the other day, one of my below-average students remarked, "I can't seem to be able to join in the dis-

² Arno L. Bader and Carlton F. Wells, *Essays for Our Time* (New York, 1947).

cussion very much—I'm so busy thinking over what the others are saying." He was, however, thinking.

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COMMUNICATION QUOTES

When an English teacher tells his students that English is a very important subject, they are likely to smile condescendingly as if to say: "Yes! An English teacher would have to say that!" But, when someone of prominence from their own chosen vocational field says that English is important, they are properly impressed.

For that reason I have found the following assignment useful. Early in the first quarter of "Freshman Communications" I ask my students to prepare a paper on the importance of either speaking, writing, listening, or reading in their own chosen occupational field. They are to find and use one well-chosen and properly footnoted quotation to emphasize their point of view, something from a book or professional journal in their major field.

The assignment is intended to introduce students to the library and to some books and magazines of importance in their major field as well as to acquaint them with proper footnote form in preparation for a longer research paper to follow. But, even more important, it serves to motivate them to greater interest in English by pointing up the relationship between skill in communication and success in their vocational field.

Most of the "Communication Quotes," as I call them, which they use, are direct statements of the importance of one of the four skills. For example, a home economics student quoted a passage from *Business Opportunities for the Home Economist* by C. G. Woodhouse, who writes: "I don't see any

very broad chance in business home-economics work for any woman who isn't a forceful writer in her subject. She must learn to put complicated technical facts and processes into plain, honest, unacademic English, without talking down or insulting the intelligence of people who may not be technically educated but who may well be smarter than she is—businessmen and housewives."

A forestry student used a statement by Gifford Pinchot from *The Training of a Forester*: "The ability to write and speak good, plain, understandable English is a prime requisite for the Forester." Some of the quotations focus on those duties requiring skill in expression. The would-be forester who thinks his days will be spent in the great out of doors may need to be reminded that "a forester needs the ability to write clear-cut reports, good business letters, and as he advances in his profession, well-ordered and well-expressed contributions to its technical and scientific literature." So says Cedric H. Guise, assistant professor of forest management, Cornell University.

An agriculture major who couldn't find a quote from his reading interviewed a personnel man for a city dairy and quoted him as saying, "When I hear an applicant say, 'I believe I can do the job good,' he isn't likely to have a chance to do it for us!"

Other quotations point up an interdependence of the skills, as does this one the relationship between reading and writing from Elizabeth Crowe Hannum's *Speak, Read, Write*: "We learn more about writing by reading good literature than can be learned in any other way. We 'catch' the ways of writing well almost as one catches the measles—by association with authors who possess skill in writing."

JAMES I. BROWN

UNIVERSITY OF MINNESOTA

Current English Forum

HAROLD B. ALLEN, JULIUS BERNSTEIN, MARGARET M. BRYANT (*chairman*)
JAMES B. MCMILLAN, KEMP MALONE, RUSSELL THOMAS

THE REASON IS BECAUSE . . .

In the June, 1940, "Current English Forum" the following inquiry appeared:

Our English books tell us that an intransitive copulative verb must be followed by a subjective complement and that a subjective complement must be a noun, a pronoun, or an adjective. How then do you explain this sentence: "She was here in this room"?

Professor Perrin answered:

The difficulty is with "our English books." . . . Contrast the point of view of a realistic grammar (Curme, *Syntax*, p. 48): "... a large number of adverbs and prepositional phrases are used as adjectives—as attributive adjectives, or as predicate complements standing after a linking verb (copula)."

Jespersen (*Essentials of English Grammar*, p. 131), Maetzner (*An English Grammar*, III, 137), and Poutsma (*A Grammar of Late Modern English*, Part I, First Half, chap. i, 5, p. 11, *et passim*) corroborate Perrin's and Curme's point of view.

The problem posed in the above inquiry is the same as that which will be discussed here. And Professor Pooley gives us the two points of view which are now taken toward the idiom "The reason is because . . ." He states:

One text says, "Examine the following incorrect sentence: 'His excuse for remaining at home was because he was ill.' The dependent clause is a substantive clause used as a subjective complement of the word *excuse*; therefore it should not have the form of an adverbial clause." This advice is traditionally sound, but when an idiom like this establishes itself, earlier grammar must yield.¹

Pooley then cites evidence of the use of this idiom which he has gathered from public

¹ *Teaching English Usage* (New York: D. Appleton-Century Co., Inc., 1946), pp. 134-35.

addresses by Stuart Chase, Professor Curme, and "... others of less note." After listing some recent examples from the *New Republic* and *Harper's Magazine*, he comments that others "abound in current writing of the better sort."

Although the discussions of the historical grammarians are pertinent to our problem, none of them lists any examples of "The reason is because . . ." type of sentence.

However, there has been some discussion of the idiom in current periodicals. Miss F. N. Cherry² cites examples from Francis Bacon, Swift, and Addison. But the greater portion of her examples is of the type "It (This or That) is (was) because . . ." Mr. Donald L. Clark³ continued the discussion, and, after calling attention to the fact that none of Miss Cherry's examples since Addison are of "The reason is because . . ." type, he dismisses consideration of the idiom. Nevertheless, his discussion is pertinent, for he raises the question as to whether the *because* clause in sentences containing "It is because . . ." should be considered as adverbial or as adnominal. After pointing out that "we have long known that noun clauses can be begun with other words than *that* (I know why he is late. That's where the shoe pinches.) . . .", he surmises that the *because* clause is adverbial.

Two other discussions of our problem

² See, e.g., Maetzner, *op. cit.*, II, 448 ff., where he points out that many words and phrases have been used in the history of the language to express causal relationship. For instance, *that*, *for that*, *for because*, *for because that*, *because*, and *in that*.

³ "Some Evidence in the Case of 'Is Because,'" *American Speech*, VIII (February, 1933), 55-60.

⁴ "Animadversions on 'Some Evidence in the Case of 'Is Because,''" *American Speech*, VIII (April, 1933), 67-68.

must be mentioned. Mr. Eston E. Ericson⁵ cites examples of "The reason is because . . ." type of sentence from the works of Hobbes, W. P. Trent, John Macy, William L. Phelps, from the *Baltimore Sun*, and from the *New York Times*. And Marckwardt and Walcott⁶ rank this idiom as "Literary English" on the basis of data from Pooley's *Grammar and Usage in Textbooks on English* and from Ericson's article.

The evidence which I have gathered shows that "The reason is because . . ." type of sentence has become established as good colloquial and literary English both in England and in the United States. My first example is from Sidney's *Apology for Poetry* (1595): "His *reason is because* Poesy dealeth with . . .," and my latest is from an editorial in the *Milwaukee Journal* (April 4, 1948): "General MacArthur has indicated that one of the *reasons* he is a presidential candidate *is because* . . ." Among the other writers who have used this idiom are Milton ("The Reason for Church Government" [1641]), Dryden ("Essay of Dramatic Poesy"), Jonathan Edwards ("Notes on the Mind"), Emerson, Thoreau, Ruskin, Mark Twain, Charles G. Dawes, the late Professor John M. Manly (*Some New Light on Chau-*

cer), Lowell Thomas, Clarence Darrow, Samuel E. Morrison (*Builders of the Bay Colony* [1930]), H. J. Massingham, the late Senator George W. Norris, Professor Walter P. Eaton, Struthers Burt, George Arliss, Professor Clyde Eagleton, E. B. White, Maritta M. Wolff, the late Prime Minister Stanley Baldwin, André Maurois, Dorothy Thompson, F. O. Matthiessen (*American Renaissance*), Carl Sandburg (*Home Front Memo* [1943]), and Professor Reginal L. Cook. It is of interest to note that the idiom appears in many different types of periodical. I have found examples in the *Atlantic Monthly*, *Harper's*, the *New York Times Book Review*, the *Reader's Digest*, the *Phi Beta Kappa Key Reporter*, *Scribner's*, *Forum*, *Good Housekeeping*, *Survey*, *Look*, *New Statesman and Nation* (London), and *College English*.

How is one to classify this construction? My own preference is to consider it as a predicative. The historical grammarians (Jespersen, Poutsma, *et al.*) would undoubtedly treat it as such.

Finally, as long as sentences of the type "It (This or That) is (was) because . . ." are written (and their number at present is legion), we can expect writers to use the type "The reason is because . . ." After all, in the former type, *It* or *This* or *That* stand psychologically for *The reason*.

RUSSELL THOMAS

⁵"Noun Clauses in *Because*," *Anglia*, LXI (1937), 112-13.

⁶*Facts about Current English Usage* (New York: D. Appleton-Century Co., 1938), p. 31.

Report and Summary

About Literature

"ROBERT FROST: THE SPIRITUAL Drifter as Poet" is an important and provocative essay by Yvor Winters in the autumn *Sewanee Review*. Winters considers that Frost is one of the most talented poets of our time, but one whose work has been largely overestimated and frequently misunderstood. The poetry of Frost appeals to a large number of his most intelligent contemporaries—schoolteachers, English professors, undergraduates, the casual reader—Winters thinks, because his ways, attitudes, perceptions, are so similar to theirs. He is an Emersonian who has become skeptical and uncertain without having reformed. Winters then goes on to analyze in detail Frost's didactic poems, and those which have a theme of moral choice, to show that Frost as a poet holds the following views: "He believes that impulse is trustworthy and reason contemptible, that formative decisions should be made casually and passively, that the individual should retreat from cooperation with his kind, should retreat not to engage in intellectual activity but in order to protect himself from outside influences, that affairs arrange themselves for the best if let alone, that ideas of good and evil need not be taken very seriously." Frost's genuine gift for writing, Winter concludes, emerges most clearly in his short rhymed lyrics, especially in his later work, and "he is a good poet so far as he may be said to exist, but a dangerous influence in so far as his existence is incomplete."

"HAWTHORNE IN THE LOOKING Glass" by Malcolm Cowley appears in the same periodical. Cowley points out that Hawthorne has filled his stories with "a shimmering wealth of mirrors" and discusses the question of these mirror images

and the relation they bear to Hawthorne's personal and literary problems. Their source is to be found in his private life. Their chief function is to serve as "a kind of window or doorway into the spiritual world." All his life Hawthorne was searching for a bridge between his two worlds and for a method of writing by which he could encompass both. He never completely succeeded, but, by comparing objects with their reflections, he found a symbolic bridge he could use time and again.

"GRAHAM GREENE AND THE MODERN Novel" by Adam De Hagedus, in the October issue of *Tomorrow*, is an account of the life and works of the young British novelist whom his contemporaries claim as the finest English novelist of this generation. According to De Hagedus, his books have such universal appeal that they do much to close the gap between the so-called "average" and the so-called "serious" reader. His best work, De Hagedus thinks, are the two novels, *Brighton Rock* and the recently published *The Power and the Glory*. At least part of the secret of his literary power, it appears, lies in his revolt from the restraints put upon the novel of the past century. Recognizing that action, violence, mystery, excitement, eroticism, are elements which most readers crave, he has restored them to the novel and, through his great descriptive power in portrayal, wealth of psychological detail, and enormous social knowledge and curiosity, has produced novels of great distinction. Neither Greene nor any contemporary writer, however, De Hagedus concludes, has, like the Elizabethans or Racine, produced a work which exhibits the real significance of our world as a period of critical transition.

EXCELLENT REVALUATIONS OF two European novelists appear in current periodicals. In the autumn *Virginia Quarterly Review* Lord David Cecil discusses the work of Turgenev as the forerunner of Tolstoy and Dostoevsky, and in the October *Atlantic Monthly* Harry Levin writes of the life and art of Marcel Proust.

Much of the value of Cecil's essay for the general reader lies in his comparison of Turgenev's literary methods with those of other Russian novelists. For example, Russian novels are more realistic and more religious than other novels, says Cecil, and in this combination of realism and spirituality Turgenev is like his fellow-authors. But in Tolstoy and Dostoevsky the Christian point of view means professed Christianity. With Turgenev this is not so. Intellectually he was an agnostic, though not hostile to Christianity. Again, he is more consciously aesthetic in his response to experience than other Russian writers. His standard of value was fundamentally aesthetic. He doesn't want to give us facts, still less to preach a gospel. He simply wants to create something beautiful.

It is especially interesting to read Cecil's essay in connection with "Tolstoy in Soviet Hands" by Mikhail Koriakov in the October *Atlantic*. In this are described the experiences of a "brain worker" in the Tolstoy Museum. The Soviet government may honor the makers of literature, but the strictures put upon literary activity, judging from this account by one subjected to them, is hardly likely to produce another Turgenev or Tolstoy.

In writing of Proust, Levin surveys, of course, the relation of his peculiarly isolated life to his peculiarly personal work. He concludes that, although Proust's facilities for observation were specialized and rarefied beyond the norm, nevertheless, because he was both the observer and the observed, "these conditions heightened the intensity of his introspection to the point where his own self-knowledge helps others to know themselves."

IN "ON BURYING THE ESSAY" Walter Prichard Eaton defends the personal essay as a literary form in which humane ideas may, perhaps, find best expression. Eaton recently attended a writers' conference in which a lecturer declared that "the personal essay is dead and done for." This started Prichard a-musing on the relative effectiveness of personal essays and polemical articles. He makes the point, for example, that it was John Muir's essays which really got protection for the Yosemite National Park, and he discusses also the essays of E. B. White and of the late Simeon Strunsky. "The tensions of politics and race relations," he writes, "are in the long run resolved only by tolerance, sympathy, understanding, by respects for human rights and dignities; and it is in the arts and literature that these things are made manifest and moving. For writers to turn from their proper task of revelation, to forsake the humanities for the arena, would in most cases benefit nobody." Eaton's "essay" appears in the *Virginia Quarterly Review*.

"ANCIENT PISTOL" BY LESLIE HOTSON in the autumn *Yale Review* is an analysis of the character of Falstaff's comrade to find out why Pistol was as popular with Elizabethan audiences as Falstaff, as the evidence proves he was. Hotson shows how, apart from other reasons, because Pistol's style of talking in verse "is a caricature of the magniloquent stuffing of the huge bombastic plays," we are fascinated to see if he can keep it up, and so were the Elizabethans.

INTERIM, A MAGAZINE OF CREATIVE expression, now in its third volume, is notable for the imagination and verbal energy of its content. Fiction, drama, poetry, and a little criticism fill its pages. The editor and publisher is A. Wilbur Stevens, Box 24, Parrington Hall, University of Washington, Seattle 5. The price is \$1.50 for four issues.

About Education

ACADEMIC FREEDOM AND THE RELATED freedom of the press become a warmer and warmer issue as feelings of all kinds are heightened by the difficulties with Russia and the possibility of a final global war. The banning of the *Nation* from the libraries of the New York City high schools, although it came about through a religious issue, is probably partly due to passions inflamed by the threat of war. The *Nation* published some articles sharply attacking the position of the Catholic hierarchy on medical matters. The author quoted Catholic authorities in evidence of the church position and other Catholic authorities in implied condemnation of it. The action of the Board of Education was taken upon recommendation of the superintendents but without hearing or notice to anyone. Protests have been many and strong—the most notable one, *An Appeal to Reason and Conscience* by 107 prominent citizens, especially college presidents and lawyers. These citizens are only incidentally interested in the admission of the *Nation* to the New York schools. They are concerned with the principle that schools and libraries should give students and patrons opportunity to read honest though partisan statements of opinion on all sides of current issues.

"THE UNDERGRADUATE AND POLITICAL Responsibility" by Howard Mumford Jones in the autumn *American Scholar* is a lively and pertinent discussion of the problem of academic freedom and particularly of the relation of the young scholar to public opinion. If we are to take seriously Emerson's dictum that one of the principal aims of scholarship is action, says Professor Jones, we cannot act only in those areas without controversy. "If scholarship is a public responsibility, that responsibility must be discharged by illuminating issues, and issues have an awkward habit of being highly controversial." After some discussion

of current controversies which have reached the campus, he sets down several general principles which he thinks can help define the rights of colleges and the rights of students in making judgments as to the character and validity of action under pressing circumstances. First, studies are primary; "the college is entirely right in insisting that they are primary; and the faculty is in duty bound to require the student to subordinate his activities to the work of the college *qua* college." The college has the duty to protect liberal education against misuse in the sense of "a young Marxist, who buttonholes the instructor in economics, reads class warfare into *Hamlet*, sums up the curriculum as bourgeois culture, and in the same breath demands that the college shall protect his sacred egoism whenever he wants to wave a red flag in front of the Wall Street bulls." The college has a right to require the student to make up his mind whether he intends to be treated as an adult or a minor. "If college authorities have sometimes quibbled about the right of students to take political or social action, students have occasionally wavered as to whether they are children or adults." He continues: "If campus organizations may be lawfully required to lead into the general purpose of a liberal education rather than away from it, and if the group seeking a franchise gives adequate proof that its purpose is dignified and its membership responsible, then I think students have the right to demand of the college protection from outside (or inside) interference comparable to that included under the principle of academic freedom." He also advocates that, where student self-government is established, "students should share with the faculty the responsibility for chartering organizations and for protecting them in their rights and holding them to their responsibilities." He concludes with the recent classic two-sentence answer of Dean Buck of Harvard to the storm of criti-

cism which blew upon him when he recognized the application for recognition of some twenty-six students, members of the local chapter of AYD. "We are aware of the statements which have been made about Communist influence in the American Youth for Democracy. Our policy, however, is based upon a faith in the ability of the American form of government to prove its value in the free market of ideas."

"KITTY OF HARVARD" BY WALTER Rollo Brown is the subject of the "Atlantic portrait" in the October *Atlantic Monthly*. It will induce a stirring of the heart and a wave of nostalgia in those who studied under him. To others it will tell a great deal about the personality and teaching methods of one of the greatest scholars of our time.

A NEW STUDY OF THE PREPARATION of college teachers is being made under the auspices of the Committee on Standards and Studies of the American Association of Colleges for Teacher Education. The chairman is Miss Marion S. Trabue, dean of Pennsylvania State College. The purpose is the improvement of the quality of college teaching. The first two problems to be investigated and studied will be the means for remedying the shortage of college teachers and the means for improving graduate programs for prospective college teachers. It is hoped that both graduate institutions which prepare teachers and undergraduate institutions which employ them will wholeheartedly participate to make the study a truly co-operative one.

THE STUDENT BODY OF STANFORD University has voted \$9,050 from student funds to be used for scholarships for ten foreign students to attend Stanford. The student funds will be used for five scholarships, and the university will provide five additional tuition scholarships. Campus groups have volunteered to house and feed and, in some cases, to supply spending money to the ten European students to be selected on the recommendations of the International In-

stitution of Education, the State Department, and others.

THE UNIVERSITY ASSOCIATION FOR Professional Radio Education has recently been formed to foster and maintain higher standards of professional education for radio. Charter members are the University of Alabama, University of Denver, Temple University, Texas College of Mines, Northwestern University, University of Southern California, Syracuse University, and University of Tulsa. Charter membership is still open to colleges and universities which can meet the minimum standards for staff, course content, and equipment. Present requirements set up by the committee on standards provide that at least one-half of the courses taught in a professional radio-training area must be taught by persons who have demonstrated successful employment in commercial radio stations; that all students completing a professional training sequence must have had general instruction in the broad over-all areas of radio, including several phases of programming, sales and advertising, and general station operation and traffic; that the course of study shall provide the student with opportunity for daily logged broadcasting experience; that equipment used in professional training must be such as to allow the student a general acquaintance with all the problems of station operation.

VOICE OF THE WORLD IS A NEW quarterly devoted to radio broadcasts published by Vox Mundi Limited, London, the yearly subscription rate \$1.75, and distributed by Rolls Publishing Co., Ltd., 2 Bram's Buildings, London, E.C. 4. Vernon Bartlett, a member of the British parliament, is the founder. In the first issue he expresses its purpose thus: "We believe that the *Voice of the World* is made up of the voices of millions of simple, decent folks who would like to get on with each other. . . . We shall select broadcasts which will enable that voice to be heard more clearly above the uproar of nationalism, greed and selfishness." The Amer-

ican quarterly *Talks* serves a somewhat similar purpose, although the criterion for selection of broadcasts to be printed is perhaps "the best in radio" rather than that which contributes best to mutual understanding.

HIGHER EDUCATION REPORTS that at Cornell University, beginning this fall, radio broadcasts from France, Spain, Italy, and other countries will be recorded by the university's Division of Modern Languages to provide real-life material for instructional purposes. The new project is part of an experimental program begun two years ago to determine how the intensive language instructional methods of the war-time programs might be converted to peacetime academic use. It is supported by a grant from the Rockefeller Foundation and backed by the American Council of Learned Societies.

NEWS PROGRAMS ARE CONSISTENTLY voted the most popular type of program by radio listeners, but, if they are to be a source of information, they must be understood. Radio has prided itself on being understood, but a recent study made by Readable News Reports for Station WCAU, Philadelphia, found by the Flesch formula that the average news program was written at the tenth-grade reading level, which means, unhappily, that six American adults out of every ten would find the news difficult to understand if they were to read it. But they heard it. Does that mean that it becomes easier to understand or harder? Are we justified in using a readability formula, developed primarily for measuring the difficulty of written materials, to measure the difficulty of spoken materials? In the September *Educational Research Bulletin* Jeanne S. Chall and Harold E. Dial report a study "Predicting Listener Understanding and Interest in Newscast" made as one of a series of research projects in communication carried on under the direction of Edgar Dale, of the Bureau of Educational Research, and Paul Wagner, a member of the department of journalism of Ohio State and news direc-

tor of Station WOSU. The difficulty of a group of news scripts was analyzed on the basis of readability, and then the predicted difficulty of the scripts was compared with actual listener understanding and interests in these newscasts. Both the Dale-Chall formula and the Flesch formula were used to analyze the scripts. The experiment is described in detail. The results, although inconclusive, definitely point to three things: that listening difficulty probably is a grade or two above the reading difficulty; that there is a definite relationship between comprehension and interest; and that readability formulas can predict the listener's understanding and interest.

ALL TEACHERS STILL YOUNG enough—in years or in spirit—to adapt themselves to new conditions should read Wayne Coy's address before the Second Annual Conference on Radio in Education. Mr. Coy is chairman of the Federal Communications Commission, but this address is not the typical officeholder's double-talk; it is about education, and vigorously thought. Address the Commission, in Washington, and ask for Chairman Wayne Coy's address of July 29, 1948.

THE THIRTEENTH AMERICAN EXHIBITION of Educational Radio Programs will occur in connection with the Nineteenth Institute for Education by Radio in Columbus, May 5-8, 1949. Exhibition entries close January 15, with I. Keith Tyler, Ohio State University. Exhibitors should be recording programs. Specifications and entry blanks from Dr. Tyler.

THE FIRST OF THE ANTI-DEFAMATION League twenty-cent "Freedom Pamphlets" is *The Responsibility Is Ours*, by Bonaro W. Overstreet. Instead of discussing the problems of minorities, it exhorts us to act consistently in accordance with our best professions. Effective—for those who already profess to be devoted to freedom for all. Address: 212 Fifth Avenue, New York 10.

Books

CHAUCER'S WORLD

Here is God's plenty indeed—to adapt the use of John Dryden's phrase. Or if not God's plenty, that is because some of the entries look somewhat less than human, although *Chaucer's World*¹ will assist one to go far on a sightseeing expedition in the fourteenth century. "Grouped about the life of a typical fourteenth-century person," the selections show us the city with the ground plan and description of a merchant's home; a hit-and-run driver; pure-food regulations; a haberdasher's wares; a request for protection from the "smoke nuisance" of certain plumbers melting their solder; the home, with a marriage settlement quartering the young couple with the bride's father; an inventory of the goods in a fishmonger's house; a wager on a wife's obedience; recipes for mortreux and biscuit of pike; a menu of some dimensions for a fish dinner "with subtleties"; provisions in various wills for the education of the young; a list of books used at St. Paul's School; directions for a chamberlain to assist his lord in bathing; blacklisted books at the university including Ovid's *Art of Love* and Pamphilus; the duties of the squire of the King's Household; and more, much more, dealing with careers, sports, travel, war, poverty, religion, and death. Occasionally the passages expand on what we know of Chaucer's pilgrims or enlighten us further regarding some of his descriptions, as in the record of attempts to "restrain the evil practices of pardoners" or the account of the fighting in 1367 of Du Guesclin's division: "There might you see thrust of lance," and so on, of

¹ *Chaucer's World*. Compiled by Edith Rickert. Edited by Clair C. Olson and Martin M. Crow. Illustrations selected by Margaret Rickert. New York: Columbia University Press, 1948. Pp. xxii+456. \$6.75.

which the echoes seem to resound in the "Knight's Tale."

If anything negative must be said, one may observe that, as with other medieval panoramas, the emphasis falls on the selection of passages which give no flattering picture of the time, even if we become aware that much of the misery and tawdriness may be paralleled today. Furthermore, it would have been useful to list some other works of the kind like those of Eileen Power and G. G. Coulton. The texts are not in every instance taken from the best edition: *London Lickpenny* might better have been quoted from *Anglia*, XX, 404 ff., and somebody should have changed the line " 'Strawberries ripe,' others coaxingly advise"—the kind of translation scholars are accused of making. The worst deficiency in the book is that on religion, where one would never guess of the glory of medieval architecture or the splendor, say, of a Mass by Guillaume de Machaut. Yet Chaucer was a great religious poet along with much else.

The book is generously illustrated with plates of manuscript illuminations, a carving in ivory, and a photograph at the Public Record Office in London of Miss Rickert at work.

As one lingers over that photograph, it will be hard to agree that the "volume intended primarily as a memorial to her seems to have lost some of its appropriateness." It is indeed "obvious that more than the bare facts entered into this re-creation of a past world." Taste and judgment will be found on every page; it is a book to which one will turn again and again with heightened interest and pleasure.

HOWARD R. PATCH

SMITH COLLEGE
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RAGE FOR ORDER

In this volume¹ Professor Warren has brought together essays on poets and novelists who have felt the "rage for order," the urgent need to discover coherence and meaning in the midst of the confusion which experience presents to the sensitive and perceptive. The achievement of form in a work of art is one with the refinement of perception and the deepening of insight. Writers, to be distinguished, must have not only acute sensitivity and intelligence but also a higher faculty, an intuition of another world, whether divine, or ideal, or hauntingly unknown; the subtle interfusion of the three faculties makes the artist and his work metaphysical.

It is by a generous extension of this unorthodox definition that Pope is admitted to the company of the metaphysicals.

The essays on Herbert, Pope, Hopkins, and Yeats are expert, fastidious, in method synoptic. Historical, biographical matter is used resourcefully and only when it really illuminates; rigorous analysis in the manner of the new critics is employed sparingly but always with freshening insight; comparisons range widely and are more genuinely revealing than those Eliot is famous for. Nor does Professor Warren evade the final responsibility of evaluating: good poetry is good in whatever kind and however it came about; the important thing is to recognize and cherish goodness.

The essays on the novelists blend technical analysis and appraisal of insight on a very high level of critical performance. Each essay is brilliant in itself, but a reader might, if he read these later essays as a tightly knit group, make some inferences not intended by the critic. Writing of Hawthorne, an acknowledged master to whom he

is deeply attached, Professor Warren is conscientious in pointing up defects in craftsmanship and timidities of spirit, is perfunctory in touching upon his triumphs of style and insight. On the other hand, in the essay on Kafka, he is so indulgent of the unfinished confusion and so enthusiastic about Kafka's brilliant discovery of the world as nightmare, that, valuable as each essay is by itself, reading them together gives one the impression that the prize has got into the hands of the wrong boy. The essay on James is confined to an adept appreciation of the old dictator's heavily freighted stylistic flights, but it suggests that with larger scope Professor Warren would be exceptionally capable of a comprehensive treatment of James.

The book as a whole is a joy to read. Each essay is adroitly ordered; the style is deft, dense but lucid. Professor Warren focuses our attention upon his subject, not on himself, and he is admirably pliable to his varying authors. There can be no doubt here of a very high order of taste. Perhaps it is unfair to conclude that it is a limited taste for the subtle and symbolical. I do feel justified in pointing out that the underlying theory of poetry as knowledge, identifying artistic form with insight into reality—the theory held by our best critics today—is as off balance as the theory of poetry as emotion so unchallengeable in the twenties. Unless this theory is tempered in application by the critic's common sense and sane standards, the powerful evocations of overstimulated imaginations may be mistaken for revelations of reality. Professor Warren's responsiveness to the adventuring imagination is so well qualified by unobtrusive exercise of sanity and judgment that in this book the theory brings forth only good fruits.

NORMAN E. NELSON

UNIVERSITY OF MICHIGAN

¹ Austin Warren, *Rage for Order*. Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1948. Pp. 161. \$3.00.

Brief Reviews

[Mention under this head does not preclude review elsewhere.]

Remembrance Rock. By CARL SANDBURG. Harcourt. \$5.00.

An epic, weaving the glory of the American dream with the lives of the people who have revered that dream and fought in war and peace to promote the ideals which have kept it alive and growing. *Remembrance Rock* is not a typical historical novel. It opens with a prologue in Washington of 1944, goes back to seventeenth-century England at the beginning of Book I, on to the landing of the Pilgrims and the western movement, then to the Civil War. It closes with Washington of the present. Readers will not be equally enthusiastic, but it will be called a great book by a large majority. 1067 pages.

Great Novelists and Their Novels. By W. SOMERSET MAUGHAM. Winston. \$3.00.

Essays on the ten greatest novels of the world and the men and women who wrote them (Maugham's choice). Analysis of the personality of each author, his motives, purpose, and methods, and the novel's background. Contents: Preface, Leo Tolstoy and *War and Peace*, Honoré de Balzac and *Old Man Goriot*, Henry Fielding and *Tom Jones*, Jane Austen and *Pride and Prejudice*, Stendhal and *The Red and the Black*, Emily Brontë and *Wuthering Heights*, Gustave Flaubert and *Madame Bovary*, Charles Dickens and *David Copperfield*, Fyodor Dostoevsky and *The Brothers Karamazov*, Herman Melville and *Moby Dick*, Postscript. Maugham writes: "The wise reader will get the greatest enjoyment out of reading them [ten best novels] if he learns the art of skipping." Of the authors he says all but Tolstoy belonged to the middle class. They may have been pleasant enough to meet—they were good company; "but they must have been hell to live with." Pen-and-ink portraits.

The Running of the Tide. By ESTHER FORBES. Houghton. \$4.00.

For a generation after the Revolutionary War, Salem men and boys sailed in proud ships with figureheads now famous in art and story. Captains came back to the fine houses where they had left their families, bearing gifts and fortunes. Old Madam Inman and her four grandsons are the central figures of Miss Forbes's most interesting story of Salem and the far-distant seaports to which the Inman men sailed. A vital tale of a bygone day. Excellent background and neither lurid nor amorous. October Book-of-the-Month.

The Burnished Blade. By LAWRENCE SCHOONOVER. Macmillan. \$3.00.

A thrilling historical romance with a background of Renaissance France and the Trebizond Empire of

Asia Minor. Pierre, a little boy of noble birth, was found alone in a forest. His parents had been killed by bandits. Adopted by an armorer, he was later apprenticed to a rich merchant. His adventures led to fabulous Trebizond, empire of harems, Pashas, and slaves. There he won the friendship of the emperor, riches, glory, and the right to return to France—and love. Literary Guild October selection.

Benjamin Lawless. By ERNEST K. GANN. Sloane. \$3.50.

The story opens with Benjamin Lawless, American pilot in the Riff War a prisoner in Morocco. With the help of another American he escapes. The story covers twenty years and four continents. Always Lawless craves adventure—and dreams of love, home, and security—and Betty. It was not always easy for Betty to reconcile the two Bens. A good story well told.

North Face. By MARY RENAUULT. Morrow. \$3.00.

Neil Langton, experienced mountain climber, whose marriage had come to a tragic end, decided to spend a few quiet weeks at a drab guest house in the Lake District. The widowed landlady had seen better days. Two thwarted and frustrated women were her guests. Then Ellen Shorland came—young, neurotic. Characterization is subtle, neuroses ably developed. A love story English in tone and setting.

The Wild Country. By LOUIS BROMFIELD. Harper. \$2.75.

Ronnie, an orphan boy, spent the summers with his grandfather, the only father he knew, on a stock farm near St. Louis. Here he came to maturity, involved in the drama, beauty, and gossip of the countryside. Boarding school, a trip to Europe, the wisdom of a fine old man, the beauty of nature, all have a part in his development.

Prize Stories of 1948: The O. Henry Memorial Awards. Selected and edited by HERSCHEL BRICKELL. Doubleday. \$3.00.

As usual, the Introduction is of great interest. "A striking thing about the present volume is the number of stories by professional teachers of writing." The editor expresses himself as pleased with the variety, and notes that no war story is included. There are interesting comments on *trends* and *tones*. "The high level of writing in the modern short story is largely a matter of its suiting of language to substance. There has been a shift from what people do to what they think." There are comments about the individual stories and why they were chosen. First prize was awarded to Truman Capote, author of

Other Voices, Other Rooms, for a story printed in the *Atlantic Monthly*. Thirtieth annual volume; twenty-four stories.

The Best American Short Stories, 1948, and Yearbook of the American Short Story. Edited by MARTHA FOLEY. Houghton. \$3.75.

Selections from both popular and "little" literary magazines. In her Preface, Miss Foley makes many interesting points. "If I were limited to only one word to describe the majority of this year's anthology, I believe I would use the word 'tension.' Perhaps a psychologist would say they show an 'anxiety' neurosis. Writers reflect the emotions of their countrymen, therefore this must be a national attitude." She also discusses weird manifestations, the happy endings, implied attributes, little magazines, the psychical. There are many very young writers and some of the names long familiar to readers. Short biographical sketches, "Roll of Honor," "Distinctive Volumes of Short Stories," and "Distinctive Short Stories in American Magazines."

Ape and Essence. By ALDOUS HUXLEY. Harper. \$2.50.

Time: 2108. Place: Ruins of University of Southern California. The third World War, which destroyed Europe and America, spared New Zealand. Interesting comments on the time between World Wars II and III. New Zealand sends a company of scientists on an expedition to North America. The devil has taken over, but "Satan has one great weakness. He never can resist carrying evil to the limit, and whenever evil is carried to the limit, it always destroys itself." In form the book is a motion-picture script.

Intruder in the Dust. By WILLIAM FAULKNER. Random. \$3.00.

Lucas Beauchamp, a Negro (he has some aristocratic southern blood), is accused of the murder of a white man and awaits mob vengeance. A white boy whom Lucas saved from drowning, with the help of an old woman, attempts to prove him innocent. A study of racial dominance, the inherent dignity of man—of community responsibility. Rather overpowering prose.

Smile, Please. By MILDRED SPURRIER TOPP. Houghton. \$3.00.

Mrs. Spurrier, widow, opened a photograph gallery in a small Mississippi town in 1907. She had two lively small daughters. The author was one of them. Her sense of humor has developed with the years, and she tells all about the family. A very funny book. Readers like it.

Storm and Echo. By FREDERIC PROKOSCH. Doubleday. \$3.00.

A strange story of a search for a legendary mountain. Two men have vanished in a previous search.

The African climate, superstitions, and diseased natives are pictured in Prokosch's thrilling prose. Good.

The Beast in Me and Other Animals. By JAMES THURBER. Harcourt. \$3.00.

A new collection of stories and pictures appearing for the first time in book form.

Northern Lights. By ROGER VERCEL. Random. \$2.75.

A young Frenchman who had never understood his departed father, a renowned Arctic explorer, is practically forced by his mother to join an expedition. A skilfully executed idealistic story threaded with mystery and romance. Good.

Seraph on the Suwanee. By ZORA NEALE HURSTON. Scribner. \$3.00.

The turpentine and sawmill country of the Suwanee and later the citrus belt form the background for this love story of Arvay and Jim Meserve. Arvay had not been a popular girl, and Jim's love came as a surprise. Her reactions to happiness as Jim prospered make a tender and humorous story.

The Wine of Astonishment. By MARTHA GELLHORN. Scribner. \$3.00.

A war story, covering the Battle of the Bulge and a winter on the borders of the Rhineland. Luxembourg city is a scene of action. An emotional story, tense with feeling. Four outstanding characters. The author's own war experiences have made her eminently fitted to write this complex, moving story.

Mrs. Party's House. By CAROLINE SLADE. Vanguard. \$3.00.

By the author of *The Triumph of Willy Pond*. Lessons for reformers and politicians, maybe. Social study. Food for thought. Not pleasant.

Bride of Fortune. By HARNETT T. KANE. Doubleday. \$2.75.

A novel based upon the life and accomplishments of Varnia H. Davis, wife of the president of the Confederacy. By the author of *New Orleans Woman*.

Chinatown Family. By LIN YUTANG. Day. \$3.00.

A somewhat humorous story of Tom Fong, Chinese immigrant laundryman, who sneaked his family into New York, opened a restaurant, and became a Chinatown leader. Interesting.

An Affair of State. By PAT FRANK. Lippincott. \$2.75.

By the author of *Mr. Adam*. Jeff Baker, young diplomat, helped build up an anti-Russian fifth column in Hungary. He mixed romance with international politics and intrigue. Witty and humorous but supercharged with tension. One character says,

"The Dictator made two mistakes. He showed the Red Army to Europe and he showed Europe to the Red Army."

The Semi-detached House. By THE HONOURABLE EMILY EDEN. Houghton. \$3.00.

By the author of *The Semi-attached Couple*. The author, born 1797, knew a world of leisured ease and grace. Her writing, says her kinsman, Anthony Eden, "formed the pastime of a woman of fashion when fashion was the world." When Lord Chester joined a special diplomatic mission to Berlin, his bride moved into a "semi-detached house" in a London suburb. How she became acquainted with the dreaded neighbors (commoners) is a pretty story.

Love among the Ruins. By ANGELA THIRKELL. Knopf. \$3.00.

Mrs. Belton is worried because so many eligible bachelors and delightful girls are blind to romance. The typical Thirkell English village story with many interesting characters, a vicar, a country mansion, guests and retainers. Pleasant, easy reading, human and clever.

First Citizen. By RICHARD SULLIVAN. Holt. \$3.00.

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Old Man Crow's Boy. By JOHN BAUMANN. Morrow. \$3.50.

The author's life has been spent in central Idaho, of which he writes. He tells a superb story of the wilderness as he knew it in 1880-1909. Cattlemen, trappers, Indians, prospectors, and horse thieves all are a part of the life. It is quite largely the development of a boy who grew up with a wise father and all the wonders of an unsettled land.

Joan of Arc: An Anthology of History and Literature Edited by EDWARD WAGENKNECHT. \$4.50.

The first article is "The Glory of the Lilies," a study of the heroine's life, by the editor. There are some fifty selections, chosen with care for historical accuracy and human interest, from the works of well-known writers. Annotated. "How It All Began," "The Problem of the Voices," "*Annus mirabilis*—and After" "Reflections," "Passion," "Five Hundred Years After."

Nathaniel Hawthorne: A Biography. By RANDALL STEWART. Yale University Press. \$4.00.

A handsome readable biography, based upon unpublished material, with emphasis upon family life, background, friends, character, etc. Interesting

facts about Hawthorne's membership in the Brook Farm experiment and his experiences as American consul in England.

The Home Book of Proverbs, Maxims and Familiar Phrases. Selected and arranged by BURTON STEVENSON. Macmillan. Pp. 2957. \$20.

Larger than Hoyt's *Practical Quotations*, the revised Bartlett, or the author's own *Home Book of Quotations*, from which it differs (1) in being less literary and more folksy, (2) in exhibiting the history of many familiar sayings, and (3) in explaining the origin as well as meaning of such phrases as "sub rosa." Many items are traced back to Greek literature and some to Egyptian. Topically arranged, of course, and provided with an index of all key words. A reference book which is excellent browsing ground for the literary-minded.

George Washington, Vols. I and II. By DOUGLAS SOUTHAL FREEMAN. Scribner. Boxed, \$15.

When completed, six volumes. Volumes I and II cover Washington's forebears, background, and youth. His ancestry, family influence, ambition, surveying, and early military experience are discussed in detail. Photographs of men and maps, documents. Handsome volumes—1,000 pages in the two.

The Divine Passion. By VARDIS FISHER. Vanguard. \$3.50.

Most recent of the "Testament of Man" series. Man worships the sun but has become a thinker concerned with sex, religion, and property. The characters are pagan but have reached the dawn of recorded history. The central character is a priest.

The Complete Poetry and Prose of Walt Whitman. Edited by MALCOLM COWLEY. Pellegrini & Cudahy. 2 vols. boxed, \$8.50.

With critical introduction.

The Proper Study of Mankind. By STUART CHASE. Harper. \$3.50.

Social science in the postwar world. How we should use existing knowledge of the social sciences, man in relation to his environment, with examples for each problem.

Sex, Symbolism, and Psychology in Literature. By ROY P. BASLER. Rutgers University Press. \$3.50.

Sex symbols are freely discussed here, but no sex images appear. Basler finds in a "psychological" interpretation of literature an integration of the ethical and the aesthetic views. He regards Freudian psychology as *one* key—but not *the* key—to literature. He recognizes nonsexual impulses of the "id" or nonrational part of personality. "Christabel," Tennyson's "Maud," "Ligeia," six of Poe's poems, and "The Love Song of J. Alfred Prufrock" are studied in detail.

Wyoming Cattle Trails. By JOHN K. ROLLINSON.
Edited by E. A. BRINSTOOL. Caxton. \$5.00.

The writer has been cowboy and ranch manager. This is a story of open-range grazing about 1880, the later influx of sheep and dry farming, the tragic dust storms that followed the breaking of the sod. There are cowboy songs, old narratives. An exciting picture of a way of life that too quickly gave way to progress in the hard and wasteful way. Many interesting illustrations.

The Fall of the Magicians. By WELDON KEES. Reynal & Hitchcock. Pp. 55. \$2.00.

A second volume of verse by a contemporary poet who is maturing well.

Love Sonnets. By LOUISE LABÉ. Translated by FREDERICK PROKOSH. New Directions. Unpaged. \$2.50.

Twenty-four sonnets by a Frenchwoman of the sixteenth century who was famous both for beauty and for knowledge.

FOR THE TEACHER

Swift. By BERNARD ACWORTH. London: Eyre & Spottiswoode, 1947 [1948]. Pp. xix + 250. 15s.

This book attempts to supplement the accent on Swift as a clergyman, already supplied by R. W. Jackson's books, but the author has apparently never heard of Jackson's first book or of important modern scholarship on Swift by Davis, Williams, Quintana, Gold, Case, Eddy, and Nicolson.

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Public-School Publicity. By GUNNAR HORN. Illustrations by KAY WHITE. Inor Publishing Co. (207 Fourth Ave., New York, N.Y.). \$3.50.

A breezily written "practical guide for teachers and administrators"—a "how-to-do" primer. It tells how to find the news, how to write it, and how to get it published or broadcast. "All of the publicity activities described in this book have worked at some time and place."

Behind the Academic Curtain: A Guide to Getting the Most Out of College. By ARCHIBALD MCINTOSH. Harper. \$2.50.

The vice-president of Haverford College adds to his own experience data gathered by questionnaire from 276 colleges. First of all, the student must know why he wants to go to college; second, he must choose the right college for his purpose. The college must know the candidates it admits and why it admits them. Eight of the eleven chapters deal with success after admission.

Your School District: The Report of the National Commission on School District Reorganization. Department of Rural Education, National Education Association, 1201 Sixteenth Street, N.W., Washington 6, D.C. Flexible cover, \$2.00; board cover, \$2.50.

A significant report for rural teachers, in high schools as well as elementary schools—and, less immediately, for all Americans.

FOR TEACHER AND STUDENT

Richard Brinsley Sheridan: His Life and His Theatre. By LEWIS GIBBS. Morrow. Pp. 280. \$4.00.

Sheridan has here found a biographer who enjoys and understands him but whose scholarly objectivity keeps him from idolizing the idol of Drury Lane. Sound and very readable. Illustrated with sixteen pages of halftones.

The Court Wits of the Restoration. By JOHN HAROLD WILSON. Princeton University Press. Pp. 264. \$4.00.

Planned as an introduction to the wits as men and writers, to present a unified study of the human and literary activities of the coterie, because the author feels that they can be seen best as individuals if they are seen first as a cohesive group.

Henry David Thoreau. By JOSEPH WOOD KRUTCH. Sloane. Pp. 298. \$3.50.

A biographical and critical study of the man and his work and of his relation to American and world literature. First volume in the "American Men of Letters" series.

Edwin Arlington Robinson. By EMERY NEFF. Sloane. Pp. 286. \$3.50.

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Medieval English Verse and Prose. By ROGER SHERMAN LOOMIS and RUDOLPH WILLARD. Appleton-Century-Crofts. Pp. 557.

An anthology in modernized versions of English verse and prose between 1100 and 1500. This is the first attempt of its kind to render in translation such a wide range of works of the period from the Norman Conquest to the Renaissance. At the end are a few pages containing brief notes on essential facts and bibliographical references.

A Guide to Trollope. By WINIFRED GREGORY GEROULD and JAMES THAYER GEROULD. Illustrated by FLORENCE W. EWING. Princeton University Press. Pp. 256. \$5.00.

An index to the characters and places and digests of the plots in all of Trollope's works, with maps showing the geography of Trollope's world.

Practical Voice Training. By H. E. GRIM. Appleton-Century-Crofts. Pp. 197. \$2.25.

For use in courses in voice training and in other courses stressing the use of the voice as a basic approach to expression and communication. Nontechnical, but not oversimplified. Stresses two important aspects of the problem of voice improvement: technical skill for vocal flexibility and psychical causes underlying vocal expression.

The Heritage of European Literature, Vol. I. By EDWARD H. WEATHERLY, A. PELZER WAGENER, EDWIN H. ZEYDEL, and ABRAHAM YARMOLINSKY. Ginn. Pp. 781. \$5.00.

Arranged to meet the need for a comprehensive anthology of major European writing, by representing a somewhat limited number of authors by relatively long selections. This first volume covers the periods of ancient Greek and Roman writings, the literature of early Western Christianity, and the literature of the Middle Ages and of the Renaissance. Editorial equipment includes introductions to literary periods, biographical sketches of authors, bibliographical suggestions, maps, and photographic illustrations.

American Literature, Vol. I. Selected and edited by JOE LEE DAVIS, JOHN T. FREDERICK, and FRANK LUTHER MOTT. Scribner's. Pp. 1119. \$5.00.

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Introduction to Literature. Edited by LOUIS G. LOCKE, WILLIAM M. GIBSON, and GEORGE ARMS. Rinehart. Pp. 592. \$2.75.

An anthology to help first-year college students understand what liberal education can mean to them. The works of literature selected for this purpose are arranged in five divisions under the general headings "Man the Individual," "Man on Beauty," "Man's Universe," "Man and Man," and "Man's Beliefs." They include short stories, plays, poems, and critical interpretations ranging from Sir Walter Raleigh to James Thurber.

College Reader. By HOMER A. WATT and OSCAR CARGHILL. Prentice-Hall. Pp. 949. \$5.30.

The authors state that this volume was designed primarily to present literary expressions of various

ideas, moods, and forms for college students who are learning to write. The contents are divided by form into two parts: biography and exposition; narrative, poetry, and drama. They range over all time and express the many and varied ideas of one-hundred-and-fifty-odd authors.

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Scribner Handbook of English. 2d rev. ed. By ALBERT H. MARCKWARDT in collaboration with FREDERIC G. CASSIDY. Pp. 474. \$2.00.

The Meaning of Words. By ALEXANDER BRYAN JOHNSON. With an Introduction by IRVING J. LEE. Milwaukee: John Windsor Chamberlain. Pp. 256.

Originally published in 1854. Nothing changed except to include Lee's Introduction.

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